Степные народы Евразии Том VI Steppenvölker Eurasiens Band VI

CORPVS TVMVLORVM SCYTHICORVM ET SARMATICORVM 2

### МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОЮЗ АКАДЕМИЙ

ИНСТИТУТ ВСЕОБЩЕЙ ИСТОРИИ РОССИЙСКОЙ АКАДЕМИИ НАУК ОТДЕЛ СРАВНИТЕЛЬНОГО ИЗУЧЕНИЯ ДРЕВНИХ ЦИВИЛИЗАЦИЙ

ГЕРМАНСКИЙ АРХЕОЛОГИЧЕСКИЙ ИНСТИТУТ

ИНСТИТУТ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЙ ПО ДРЕВНОСТИ И СРЕДНИМ ВЕКАМ «АВЗОНИЙ» НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫЙ ЦЕНТР НАУЧНЫХ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЙ, УНИВЕРСИТЕТ БОРДО МОНТЕНЬ

СТЕПНЫЕ НАРОДЫ ЕВРАЗИИ

Том VI

# CORPVS TVMVLORVM SCYTHICORVM ET SARMATICORVM

Под редакцией Аскольда Иванчика и Германа Парцингера



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# Ульские курганы

# Культово-погребальный комплекс скифского времени на Северном Кавказе

Под редакцией А. И. Иванчика и А. М. Лескова



Палеограф 2015 Москва Берлин Бордо

# CORPVS TVMVLORVM SCYTHICORVM ET SARMATICORVM

2

# The Ulskii Tumuli

# Cultic and Burial Ensemble of the Scythian Period in the Northern Caucasus

Edited by Askold Ivantchik and Alexander Leskov



Paleograph Press 2015 Berlin Bordeaux Moscow **The Ulskii Tumuli. Cultic and Burial Ensemble of the Scythian Period in the Northern Caucasus.** Corpus tumulorum scythicorum et sarmaticorum, 2. Berlin, Bordeaux, Moscow: Paleograph Press 2015

Ульские курганы. Культово-погребальный комплекс скифского времени на Северном Кавказе. Corpus tumulorum scythicorum et sarmaticorum, 2. Москва, Берлин, Бордо: Палеограф 2015

Translated by K. Judelson

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ISBN 978-5-89526-026-5 (English edition)

ISBN 978-5-89526-025-8 (Russian edition)

Printed in Russia by IPK Pareto-print, www.pareto-print.ru.

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# INTRODUCTION

A. I. Ivantchik, A. M. Leskov

The excavations undertaken by N. I. Veselovskii laid invaluable foundations for the archaeological investigation of the Kuban region. His excavations were without doubt an epoch-making achievement in these endeavours.

B. V. Pharmakovskii

The second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were a period marked by the most famous archaeological discoveries in the South of Russia. The unique finds made in the cities and burial-grounds of the Ancient Greeks on the northern shores of the Black Sea and in the magnificent burial-mounds of the Scythian-Sarmatian period excavated in the steppes of the North Pontic region and the North-western Caucasus brought this part of the world international fame. The leading museums of Russia and the Ukraine take just pride in the remarkable ancient treasures obtained thanks to the efforts of A. A. Bobrinskii, I. E. Zabelin, Y. A. Kulakovskii, A. E. Lyutsenko, D. Y. Samokvasov, V. G. Tizengauzen and many others.

A special place in this list should be accorded to the tireless explorer of burial-mounds in the South of Russia, Nikolai Ivanovich Veselovskii (1848–1918), professor of St. Petersburg University and the Archaeological Institute, Corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences. His first field expedition was in 1883, when he began to excavate in the Dnieper region, in the Crimea and in the Kuban region. The many hundreds of burial-mounds excavated by Veselovskii and his fellow archaeologists during this and subsequent expeditions included sites of world significance. While the excavations undertaken by N. I. Veselovskii in the Crimea and the lower reaches of the Dnieper brought him fame on account of the discovery of a splendid series of outstanding Scythian burial-mounds (Chmyrev, Malaya Lepetikha, Verkhnii Rogachik, Oguz, Talaevskii, Zolotoi, Dort-Oba and, finally, Solokha), in the last 25 years of his life (1897–1917) he investigated the remarkable burial-mounds of the Kuban region from a period stretching from the Chalcolithic to Medieval times. It was precisely N. I. Veselovskii who discovered the famous Maikop burial-mound and the dolmens under burial-mounds near the village of Novosvobodnaya (formerly known as Tsarskaya) — sites which to a large extent defined our views of the Early Bronze Age in the Northern Caucasus. For the study of the history of the relations between the local farming tribes of the Maeotians, the nomadic Sarmatians and the Greek cities of the Bosporan kingdom in the early centuries AD Veselovskii's achievements were no less important — his investigation of the so-called 'Golden Cemetery', an enormous row of 94 burial-mounds stretching for many kilometres along the northern bank of the Kuban River in its middle reaches.

It is difficult to over-estimate the significance of the immensely rich burial-mounds of the Adygei nobility for the medieval history of Southern Russia, which Veselovskii also excavated near the village of Belorechenskaya. Finds from these burial-mounds testify to the wide-scale contacts, which the local tribes maintained with their neighbours far and wide. Chinese, Iranian and Italian textiles, jewellery from Asia Minor, Central-Asian pottery, Syrian glass, Venetian silver all serve to provide convincing proof of the fact that as early as the III millennium BC and right up until the 14<sup>th</sup> century AD the North-western Caucasus provided a cultural bridge linking the heartlands of ancient civilizations with the world of the Eurasian steppes.



Fig. 1. N. I. Veselovskii (1848-1918)

Yet of all the sites excavated by N. I. Veselovskii those of the greatest scientific interest are the burialmounds of the Scythian period in the Kuban region. Veselovskii investigated burial-mounds near the villages of Kostromskaya, Ladozhskaya, Ust-Labinskaya, Voronezhskaya, Kelermesskaya, Marinskaya, Yelizavetinskaya and the aul of Ulskii. In 1897 when Veselovskii had only just started looking for Scythian sites in the Kuban region he discovered the famous plate in the shape of a deer in one of the burialmounds near the village of Kostromskaya (late-7th or early-6<sup>th</sup> century BC), which came to symbolize Scythian art as a whole. In 1917, a few months before his death, N. I. Veselovskii completed his excavations of Yelizavetinskaya burial-mounds (4<sup>th</sup> century BC), where among other objects he discovered a Greek bronze breast-plate with a depiction of the Gorgo Medusa — a striking example of Graeco-Roman art. The deer from Kostromskaya and the Gorgo Medusa from Yelizavetinka were most revealing finds: the early sites are distinguished by splendid works of art in the Scythian Animal Style, often found in conjunction with art objects from the Near East, while at the rich sites of the 4th century BC many imported Greek articles were found — this was a consequence of the close links between the local tribes and the cities of the Bosporan Kingdom and, via the latter, probably with Greece itself. A similar picture was revealed by the burial-mounds in the steppes of the

North Pontic region, but here there were very few sites of the 7<sup>th</sup> and early-6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. For this reason the burialmounds of the region south of the Kuban provide extremely important materials for the characterization of the Archaic culture of the Scythians. Most important among these are the Kelermes burial-mounds striking for the rich diversity of the remarkable creations wrought by masters of applied art from Assyria, Urartu and the states of Asia Minor found together with outstanding examples of the Scythian Animal Style, horse harness and weaponry. The excavations of these burialmounds are inextricably linked with the name of N. I. Veselovskii.

In contemporary archaeological literature a great deal is written about the far from perfect excavation methods used by Veselovskii, which left a good deal to be desired even by the standards of his day. Yet we have to ask ourselves: what would Russian archaeology be today without the materials obtained thanks to the tireless efforts of N. I. Veselovskii? The most unequivocal answer to this question is provided by the 'Treasury' in Saint Petersburg's Hermitage Museum. Its display of exhibits opens with the assemblage from the Maikop Burial-mound, the richest assemblage dating from the III millennium BC in Europe (apart from Greece). These treasures are followed by masterpieces from the Kelermes and Ulskii burialmounds and from other sites excavated by N. I. Veselovskii. Pharmakovskii's assessment of his work, which was used as an epigraph at the beginning of this Introduction could well be extended so as to apply to all the southern regions of Eastern Europe. The importance of a comprehensive publication of Veselovskii's legacy and also of the findings gleaned from new excavations is keenly felt today at a time when the Scythian question is once more being hotly debated. The controversial nature of questions connected with Scythian history can be explained by reference to the inadequacy of its source base. This has led the Deutsches Archäologsiches Institut, the Department for Comparative Studies on Ancient Civilizations of the Institute of World History, the Russian Academy of Sciences and the "Ausonius" Institut des recherches sur l'Antiquité et le Moyen-Age (Bordeaux) to come forward with the idea of publishing the outstanding sites of the nomads of Eurasia, supplementing without fail each of the ensuing volumes with a complete catalogue of the attendant finds, which are, of course, of great importance in themselves. Even specialists are not yet familiar with the full range of finds from many of these sites, although it is precisely this wealth of finds which constitutes the basis for any comprehensive work in this field, for any theoretical conclusions. Judgements and opinions of even the most authoritative specialists are always subjective, which means that over time they will be re-examined. Only an archaeological source is objective and in this respect eternal. It was a wholly logical decision to devote the first publication in this new series to the largest and richest assemblage of finds from the Archaic Scythian period, that originating from the Kelermes Burial-ground<sup>1</sup>. The second volume was devoted to the burial-mounds near the Krasnoe Znamya Farmstead in the Stavropol region, which date from a similar period<sup>2</sup>. On the grounds of territorial proximity and the chronological sequence it is logical to devote the next volume precisely to the Ulskii burial-mounds<sup>3</sup>. The Ulskii burial-mounds are situated on the bank of the small Ulka River, a tributary of the Laba, which flows into the Kuban River, a mere 40 kilometres from the Kelermes Burial-ground. The fact that they are close in date has always been acknowledged by all scholars, since some of the types of artefacts from the more ancient of the Kelermes burial-mounds are still to be found in the later ones at the Ulskii site. Furthermore most of the objects from the Ulskii assemblage are held in the Hermitage Museum, as is also the case with regard to the finds from Kelermes and, last but not least, the excavation of both groups of burial-mounds was carried out by N. I. Veselovskii.

Fate decreed that the materials from the Ulskii burial-mounds should end up in four different museums. The finds from the 1898 excavations were acquired by the State Historical Museum (Moscow) with the exception of two artefacts now in the Hermitage (Saint Petersburg), where finds from the 1908–1909 excavations also came to rest. Finds from the 1982–1983 excavations are held in the State Museum of Oriental Art (Moscow). New finds from the excavations of 2007 are kept in the State Museum of the Republic of Adygea (Maikop). The current volume has been prepared thanks to the joint efforts by members of staff from the above museums. In so far as this publication has been a collective enterprise, the interpretations put forward by the authors in its various chapters may not necessarily all be compatible. Indeed they might even contradict each other. Yet our overall objective has been to publish in full the materials from the Ulskii burial-mounds, which we hope will provide a reliable factual basis for future research.

Throughout their work the authors have enjoyed invaluable help from A. Y. Alexeev (State Hermitage), I. I. Gushchina, K. B. Firsov (State Historical Museum), E. A. Beglova, Y. I. Treiner (State Museum of Oriental Art), F. K. Dzhigunova, A. A. Kotseva (National Museum of the Republic of Adygea) and we should like to express our sincere gratitude to our colleagues for their kind support.

The team was a large one and the Caucasus Archaeological Expedition from the Museum of Oriental Art in 1982– 1983 was the largest one supported by the Ministry of Culture of the USSR at that time: it was only able to be successful in its endeavours thanks to the support and help received from the government of Adygea (N. A. Berzegov, M. S. Tlekhas). The authorities in charge were, however, a long way away — in the capital of the Republic, in Maikop while the members of the expedition were living in an aul (or village) and working on land that belonged to the local "Caucasus" collective farm. It was there that the members of the expedition were given invaluable help by the chairman of the collective farm. He provided accommodation for the expedition, help with machinery and fuel and food supplies, sorting out all their daily requirements: Aidamar Bagadirov played a most active part in providing this support, as did his friend Sultan Kikov, chairman of the neighbouring "Shturbino" state farm. We were all extremely grateful for their efforts. The head of the administration of the Ulyap Rural Settelment (B. D. Dokumov, who also helped with the preparation of this volume) was equally responsive to the needs of the 2007 expedition.

It is also a pleasure for us to thank all the hospitable residents of the aul of Ulyap for the consideration and attentive help which they gave us during the excavations of the Ulskii burial-mounds in 1982, 1983 and 2007.

account materials which were published after that. The delay in publication made it possible, however, to include as an appendix a report written by V. P. Erlikh about the final stage of the investigation of one of the Ulskii burial-mounds in 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Галанина/Galanina 1997.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Петренко/Petrenko 2006.

 $<sup>^{3}</sup>$  The manuscript of this volume was completed in 2002 and for that reason the contributors to its various sections were unable to take into



# Excavations of the Ulskii Burial-mounds in 1898, 1908 and 1909

L. K. Galanina

On the south-eastern edge of the *aul* or village of Ulyap in the Krasnogvardeiskii District of the Adygei Republic there is a compact group of burial-mounds stretching from West to East. Not far away to the North-East of these burial-mounds is the edge of a terrace located above the flood-plain of the River Ulka, from whence the name of the burial-mounds themselves. In 1898, when N. I. Veselovskii embarked upon his investigation of the Ulskii burial-mounds there were 10 of them at this spot.

When we recall that the brief information about Veselovskii's excavations was not published until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the Reports to the Archaeological Commission (OAK) and that the hand-written reports with a few illustrations are kept in the archive of the Institute for the History of Material Culture (IIMK) in St. Petersburg, it becomes patently clear that this material needs to be made more readily accessible to the scholars of today. There now follows a rendering of Veselovskii's report close to the original text and incorporating both details of the inventory files kept in the Hermitage Museum and references to the catalogue attached to this volume.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF THE SITES**

## **EXCAVATIONS OF 1898**

Of the two burial-mounds excavated by N. I. Veselovskii this year, the first is of particular interest: it attracted attention straightaway on account of the unusual wooden constructions inside it and the striking abundance of sacrificed horses.

## BURIAL-MOUND 1 AIIMK, Fond 1, File 60/1898, Pages 13–17, 65; OAK 1898, 30, 31

This is the largest burial-mound in the Ulskii group and it is 15 metres high (*Fig.* 2-6). During the Caucasian War a battery of soldiers was stationed on it, which led to the top of the mound being flattened, while the southern edge was made longer on account of the earth that was thrown down on to it. A trench was dug by the excavators through the mound from the South which was 60 metres long and 25 metres wide.

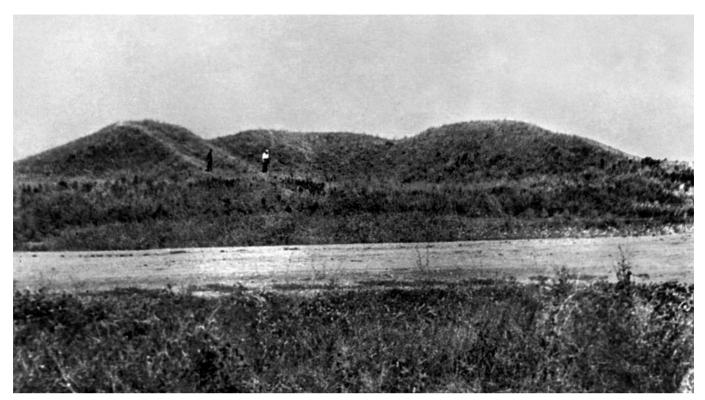


Fig. 3. Burial-mound 1/1898. AIIMK, FA, negative 52078.

From the very beginning of the work pieces of coarse clay pots and polished black vessels were encountered: the bulk of these vessels was left behind at the site of the excavations. Pieces of charcoal and fragments of copper were also found.

In the centre of the burial-mound an ancient grave-looter' "crater" was identified, which was 6.5 metres in diameter and with ledges at the sides. It had two side tunnels leading off it — one in a westerly and the other in an easterly direction (*Fig. 4*). In the eastern tunnel a plate bearing a depiction of two griffins tearing a goat asunder was found which also had the figure of a goat in the background (1, *Cat. 9, Plate 29, 1*)<sup>1</sup> and in the same place, but 50 cms lower down there were some iron arrow-heads as well (2, *Cat. 8*). On the lowest step-ledge in the grave-looters' crater pieces of two bronze cauldrons were found (3, 4, *Cat. 10, 11*), two sherds from Greek painted kraters<sup>2</sup> and somewhat further down there were bronze and iron plates for armour and fragments of black-polished vessels (6, *Cat. 13–15*).

In the upper part of this mound at a height of 5.35 metres from the virgin soil on an area that had been rendered even, horse skeletons had been laid out in rows or in groups. Some of them made it look "as if they had been tied to posts" (AIIMK, Fond 1, File 60/1898, Page 14). The remains of approximately 50 horses were found and in addition some of the horse skeletons had been destroyed by grave-looters while others protruded partly beyond the confines of the excavation trench. The bones of sheep and two donkeys were also discovered.

At the base of the burial-mound on the virgin-soil the following picture was revealed (*Fig. 5, 6*)<sup>3</sup>. At a distance of 15 metres from the beginning of the excavators' trench in the southern part of the burial-mound two "large" posts were discovered, which had been sunk into the virgin soil at a distance of 5.35 metres from each other and which would appear

<sup>1</sup> Here and subsequently the figures in front of the Catalogue numbers are the numbers from Veselovskii's inventory lists. If there are neither catalogue nor inventory numbers, this means that the object has been lost. Some articles have not been included in the catalogue because of their highly fragmentary state and in such cases only their inventory number will be given in brackets. Materials from the excavations of 1898 were mainly acquired by the State Historical Museum. Articles were transferred to the Hermitage from the RAIMK (Russian Academy for the History of Material Culture) in 1924 and 1926. Only the gold head of a horse from Burial-mound 2/1909 was transferred there from the Archaeological Commission in 1914.

<sup>2</sup> The pieces of cauldrons turned out actually to be the rims of bronze vessels. Veselovskii's identifications of Classical pottery as fragments of craters were also incorrect. Cf. the chapter by I. V. Ksenofontova in this volume.

<sup>3</sup> Veselovskii's plans were carelessly drawn and the measurements were not precise.

## 1. Eastern baulk: western face

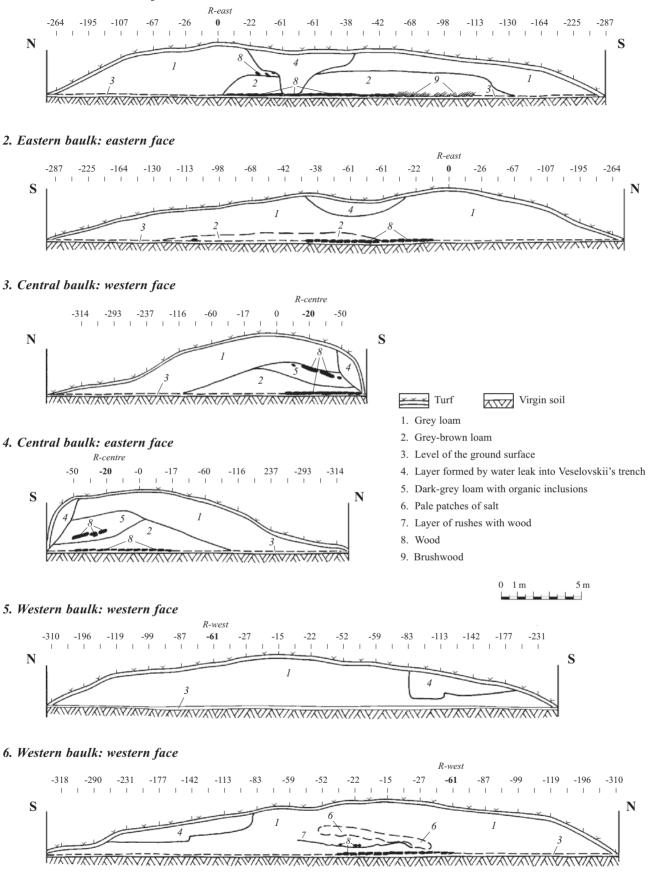


Fig. 35 Burial-mound 1/2007. Profiles of the baulks.

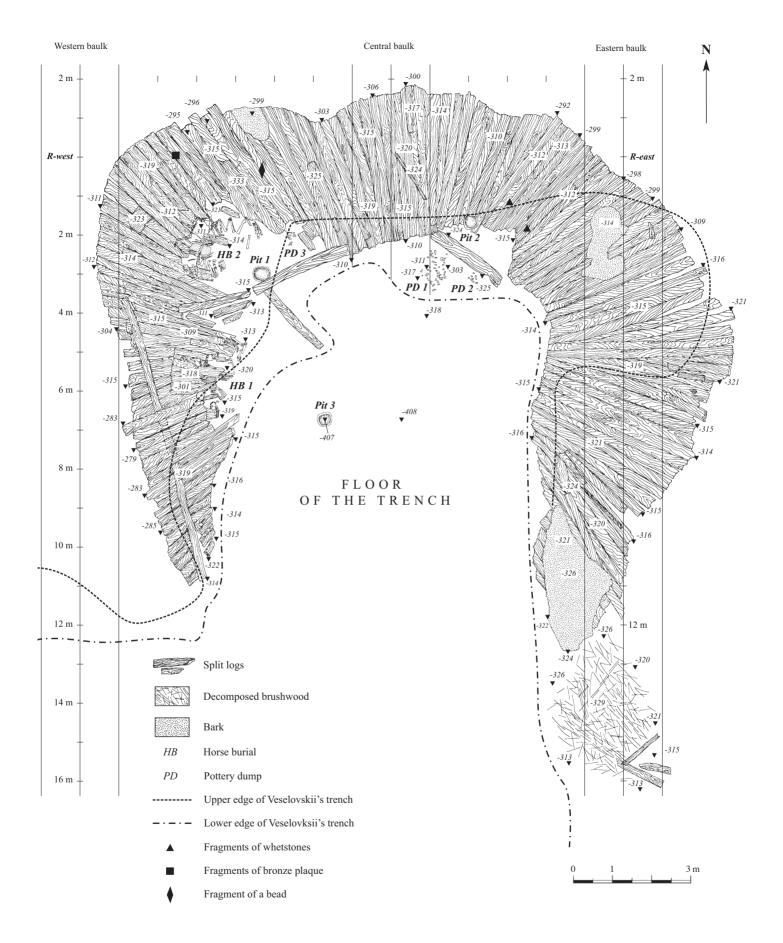


Fig. 36. Burial-mound 1/2007. Plan of the wooden flooring at the level of the ground surface.

# CATALOGUE

This catalogue is divided into sections based on the years during which excavations took place. The description of the materials is provided according to burial-mound, regardless of where the materials are currently held. If the relevant data are accessible separate groups of objects within each burial-mound are singled out (horse burials, for instance) or other, comparatively small groups of materials linked together by similar circumstances relating to their discovery (in grave-robber's tunnels, for instance), by the fact that they were found within one and the same layer or at one and the same level or because they had been immediately adjacent to each other. Within each section of the Catalogue the artefacts are listed and described within the following categories: 1. objects of a cultic nature; 2. horse harness; 3. weaponry; 4. jewellery and household objects; 5. vessels. All the measurements are given in centimetres.

#### **1–38. EXCAVATIONS OF 1898**

#### 1-15. BURIAL-MOUND 1

*1. Bit. Plate 1.* Iron, forging. Length 23 cms. Rod-shaped, two-part bit with loops at the end. State Historical Museum. Inv. No. 42405, оп. Б 192, 59.

2. Cheek-piece. Plate 1. Iron, forging. Length 19 cms. Rod-shaped bit, rectangular in section, slightly curved and twoholed. One end has a small «knob» on it, while the other tapers to a point.

State Historical Museum. Inv. No. 42405, оп. Б 192, 60.

3. Cheek-piece. Plate 1. Iron, forging. Length of surviving part 17 cms. Rod-shaped and two-holed cheek-piece. The central part containing the holes is flattened out slightly and also one of the ends in the form of a small stylized head of a bird of prey. Its eye has been portrayed in the form of a round hole. The second end which had also been flattened out has been broken off.

State Historical Museum. Inv. No. 42405, оп. Б 192, 61.

**4.** *Bit with cheek-pieces. Plate 1.* Iron, forging. Length of bit 21.2 cms; length of surviving cheek-piece fragments 5.5 and 13.4 cms. Rod-shaped, two-part bit, square in section and with loops at the ends. Rod-shaped two-holed cheek-pieces had been inserted into the loops. The central part containing holes of one cheek-piece had survived and over half the length of the other was intact.

State Historical Museum. Inv. No. 42405, оп. Б 192, 66.

**5.** *Bit. Plate 1.* Iron, forging. Length 20.3 cms. Rod-shaped, two-part bit, square in section and with loops at the ends. State Historical Museum. Inv. No. 42405, οπ. Б 192, 67.

6. Bit with Cheek-pieces. Plate 1. Iron, forging. Length 15.5 cms. Length of cheek-piece fragment 1.5 cms. Rod-shaped, two-part bit. The inner loops and some of the rods have survived from the bit and part of the straight rod with a hole from the cheek-piece.

State Historical Museum. Inv. No. 42405, оп. Б 192, 68.

7. *Cheek-piece. Plate 1.* Iron, forging. Length of the surviving fragment 19.5 cms. Rod-shaped, two-holed cheek-piece. The central part, incorporating the holes, has been flattened and also one of the ends which has been fashioned in the shape of a small stylized bird of prey. The second end is broken off.

State Historical Museum. Inv. No. 42405, оп. Б 192, 69.

8. Arrow-heads. Plate 2. 49 items. At preset 46 intact items and small fragments. Iron, forging. Length 1.9–2.1 cms. Tri-lobate arrow-heads with a triangular tip and a long socket, which broadens out towards the bottom. State Historical Museum. Inv. No. 42405, оп. Б 192, 2–50.

9. Plate. Plate 29, 1. Gold, embossing. Length 17.3 cms; width 6.3 cms. Rectangular with a depiction of a deer and two griffins attacking a goat. There are holes along the edge so that it could be attached to whatever it decorated. State Historical Museum. Inv. No. 42405, оп. Б 192, 1. Bibliography: OAK 1898, 30, puc. 42; Ростовиев 1925, 334; Мелюкова 1964, 33; Черненко 1981, 31, 32.

10. Vessel. Plate 1. Bronze, forging. Length of the surviving part of the rim 19.5 cms. Fragment of the upper part of the body with a broad thickened edge turned sharply outwards.

State Historical Museum. Inv. No. 42405, оп. Б 192, 51.

*11. Vessel. Plate 1.* Bronze, forging. Diameter 26 cms. Fragment of a straight rim with the transition to the body. State Historical Museum. Inv. No. 42405, оп. Б 192, 52.

12. Fragment of a Figurine. Fig. 25. Clay, made in a mould. Dimensions:  $4.5 \times 2 \times 1.5$  cms. Female head in a high head-dress. Facial features are worn and smoothed down, the back of the head is chipped.

State Historical Museum. Inv. No 42405, оп. Б 192, 62. Analogues: Финогенова 1992, puc. 1, с. 237; Winter 1900, 43,5a

13. Fragment of a black-figure vessel. Fig. 26. Clay, wheel-turned, painted decoration. Dimensions:  $6.2 \times 3.7$  cms. Part of the lip and wall. The lip is slightly thickened and turned outwards: there is a stripe of glaze along it which extends on to part of the straight wall as well. Below this there is a fragment of painted decoration part of a multi-petalled palmette. The inside is covered with black glaze.

State Historical Museum. Inv. No. 42405, оп. Б 192, 54. *Analogues: Горбунова 1983, 182, № 155.* 

14. Fragments of a black-figure vessel. Plate 28, 2. 3 pieces. Clay, wheel-turned, painted decoration. Carving, applied colours. Dimensions:  $5.6 \times 3.7$  cms;  $3.5 \times 5.8$  cms. Vessel of container type. Painted decoration has been applied and figures of warriors from a battle scene have survived in part: the details have been conveyed through carving and, to judge from the surviving traces, through added purple and white.

State Historical Museum. Inv. No. 42405, оп. Б 192, 55, 57, 58.

15. Fragment of a black-figure kylix. Plate 28, 1. Clay, wheel-turned, painted decoration, applied colours. Dimensions:  $8.2 \times 11.5$  cms. The vertical rim turns slightly outwards and it has been marked off from the round-conical body by a low rib. The horizontal handle (round in section) curves slightly upwards and its inner surface is reserved. Apart from two reserved bands, one of which (the upper one) is decorated with a garland of alternating palmettes and vertical petals arranged in plaited ornament (details of the pattern are conveyed through carving and added purple), the whole of the external and internal surfaces are black glazed.

State Historical Museum. Inv. No. 42405, оп. Б 192, 53, 56. Analogues: Vanderpool 1946, pl. LXII, p. 314; CVA, USA 11, pl. XVIII, 30a.

### 16-38. BURIAL-MOUND 2

16. Bit with cheek-pieces. Plate 3. Iron, forging. Length of the bit 20 cms; length of the cheek-pieces 20.6 and 13.7 cms. Rod-shaped two-part bit, square in section and with loops at the ends. Rod-shaped, two-holed cheek-pieces which broaden out in the centre where the holes are in the shape of a figure of eight. One end is slightly curved. The end of one of the cheek-pieces is broken off.

State Historical Museum. Inv. No. 42405, оп. Б 192, 63.

17. Bit with cheek-piece. Plate 3. Iron, forging, Length of the bit 18.4 cms; length of the cheek-piece 14.5 cms. Rod-shaped two-part bit, square in section and with loops at the end. An S-shaped, two-holed cheek-piece has been inserted

# PLATES

