

INVESTIGATIONS OF
THE COASTAL PART OF ILYICH-1
SETTLEMENT IN 2015–2016

The ancient settlement of Ilyich-1 in Temryuk District of Krasnodar Kray, investigated in 2015–2016 by expeditions of the Institute for the History of Material Culture (St Petersburg), the Institute of Archaeology of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Moscow), and the independent non-profit organization “Scientific Research Centre for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage” (Saratov), is situated around the well-known archaeological site of Ilyich. The settlement of Ilyich is located on the north-eastern outskirts of the modern village of Ilyich, about 2 km north-east from the beginning of the Chushka Spit and about 0.5 km from the modern coastal cliff (35 m above sea level). Together with the archaeological site of Ilyich, the site of Ilyich-1 is a monument of Federal significance, designated in the State Register under the number 3337 as the “Settlement and the archaeological site of Ilyich”. The distribution of the excavated artefacts suggests that the settlement covers an area of about 42 hectares.¹ The core of the site is a fortress, which was built around the turn of the eras. It was surrounded by a settlement of the 1st–2nd centuries BC within its limits marked by an earthen rampart.

According to E. Ya. Nikolaeva, no ditches were revealed in front of the ramparts, “however, to the east of the site of the ancient settlement, N. I. Sokolsky found the remains of a ditch: an external system of fortifications which protected the settlement from land attacks from the inland of the island”.² Beyond this ditch to the south and southeast, the economic periphery of the settlement was found. E. Ya. Nikolaeva³ assumed that the area of the settlement of Ilyich-1, including the nearest economic zone, was about 6.5 hectares. In addition, within the borders

¹ Paromov 1992 [Я. М. Паромов, “Археологическая карта Таманского полуострова”], 98.

² Nikolaeva 1981 [Э. Я. Николаева, “Поселение у д. Ильич”], 88; Nikolaeva 1990 [Э. Я. Николаева, “Ильичевское городище – крепость трапезитов”], 136.

³ Nikolaeva 1979 [Э. Я. Николаева, “Раскопки Ильичевского городища”], 376.

outlined by surface finds, economic complexes were excavated 0.5 km to the west from the settlement (excavations “Bereg-I” [“Coast-I”] and “Bereg-III”).

During the archaeological excavations of 1993, a part of a wine-making complex was discovered at “Bereg I” excavation area. It was investigated under the direction of E. R. Ustaeva. At the winery, one complete pressing platform was preserved, a second one was preserved partially as well as a cistern adjacent to area no. 1. In the southern sector of the excavation, a section of masonry was discovered, which served as the foundation for mudbrick walls. The length of the preserved masonry is 15 m, the width is 0.70 m, and the maximum height is 0.35 m. The bases of the walls of the complex were constructed of flagstones, cobblestones and sandstone. Areas of a courtyard paved with large stone slabs were opened. The complex was strongly disturbed. The finds from its layer are dated to the 1st cent. BC – 1st cent. AD.⁴

At the Bereg-III area excavated under the direction of A. A. Zavoykin in 1996–1997,⁵ the remains of a residential and economic building (farmhouse), of the first half of the 1st century were discovered. It was constructed on a low stone foundation (only 3–4 courses). The upper parts of the walls, apparently, were made of mudbricks.

The assemblage of the youngest finds, according to A. A. Zavoykin, dates the destruction of the building to the period of the internecine war between the sons of Aspourgos/Mithridates VIII and Kotys I, i. e. to the 40 BC.⁶

The “Bereg-IV” excavation was started in the western part of the settlement, on the high bank of the Kerch Bay with a total area of 5,675 sq. m.

It is of note that in the settlement of Ilyich-1, prior to the excavations of 2015–2016, amphora finds of the Classical and Hellenistic periods were uncovered only sporadically. The same was with coins from the Bosporan minting of the 4th–2nd centuries BC which had previously been found only in “Bereg-I” excavation site.

Most of the material studied and most of the objects of the “Bereg-IV” excavation belong to a narrow chronological period (mid-1st century BC –

⁴ Ustaeva 1993 [Э.Р. Устаева, “Раскоп ‘Берег-1’”, in: Э. Я. Николаева, Э. Р. Устаева, *Отчет о работах Ильичевского отряда Таманской археологической экспедиции ИА РАН г. Москвы и Ильичевского отряда Таманского отдела Краснодарского музея-заповедника в 1993 г.*], 25–33.

⁵ Zavojkin 1996 [А. А. Завойкин, “Полевой отчет о раскопках на Ильичевском городище в 1996 году”]; Zavojkin 1997a [А.А. Завойкин, “Полевой отчет о раскопках на Ильичевском городище в 1997 году”].

⁶ Zavojkin 1997a, 32.

first half of the 1st century AD). These are finds provenient from the excavation of a large ancient manor house with an area of about 450 sq. m and from excavations of three wineries (Figs. 1, 2), one of which was partially investigated in 1993 by an archaeological expedition of the Taman Museum under the direction of E. R. Ustaeva. To this period, also over 225 objects of household and manufacturing purpose are dated.

In addition, we studied a number of complexes of the Hellenistic period of the 4th– 2nd centuries BC. These include materials from two ash pits, four baby burials in amphorae and five middens. The most interesting objects are presented by two ash-pits, which yielded the predominant majority of amphorae containers, mostly stamped, of the Hellenistic period.

Objects nos. 15, 15A. The ash-pit in the southern part of the excavation was of an elongated plan 8.5 m long and at least 0.7 m wide in the southern part and up to 1.8 m wide in the northern sector. Some of the amphorae found in the ash-pit have stamps dating the object to the time span from the middle of the 4th to the first quarter of the 3rd century BC.⁷

Object no. 265. The deep oval ash-pit in the north-eastern section of the excavation area (the excavated part was measuring 18×7 m) was filled with grey loose loam with a high content of ash and mussel shells. The thickness of the layer was from 0.8 m to 1.2 m. A significant number of amphora stamps were found in this layer dating primarily from the 3rd–2nd cent. BC.⁸ A. A. Zavoykin believed that the space separating the coastline from the main settlement was not built up and possibly there was a small rural settlement in the area of the excavation “Bereg-1” in the 4th–2nd centuries BC.⁹ This hypothesis was confirmed in 2015–2016

⁷ All definitions of the stamps were made by N. A. Pavlichenko (The Institute for the History of Material Culture, RAS). See also the results of pre-processing of the stamps: Sharov 2016 [О. В. Шаров, “Новые комплексы протомеотской эпохи на Тамани”], 127–129; Sharov–Pavlichenko 2017 [О. В. Шаров, Н. А. Павличенко, “Предварительные итоги исследований амфорных клейм, происходящих из раскопок береговой части поселения Ильич-1”] 630, 631 (Herakleia: nos. 3–8; Sinope: no. 10, 56, 58).

⁸ Sharov 2015 [О. В. Шаров, “Отчет о спасательных археологических раскопках на территории поселка Ильич Темрюкского района Краснодарского края Российской Федерации в 2015 году”], Appendix no. 1, no. 2 – Thasos; nos. 11–15, 17, 20, 21, 23, 27, 29–32, 35, 39, 41, 44, 53, 55 – Sinope; nos. 62, 63, 65, 67, 69 – Rhodes; no. 73 is an unknown centre.

⁹ Zavoykin 1997b [А. А. Завойкин, “Археологический комплекс ‘Ильичевское городище’. Итоги исследований и перспективы. Рукопись статьи по плановой теме в 1997 году”], 67.



Fig. 1. Settlement Ilyich-1. Excavation "Bereg IV". Winery no. 1



Fig. 2. Settlement Ilyich-1. Excavation "Bereg IV". Winery no. 2

through the discovery of complexes of the Hellenistic period. In addition, coin finds support this theory: of 28 identifiable coins, 23 pieces are dated to the 4th–2nd centuries BC. Judging from the voluminous ash-pits in the north-eastern and south-eastern parts of the excavation, the settlement of the 4th–2nd centuries BC was located to the east and north from the boundaries of the excavation. Probably, we are dealing with at least two farm estates of the Hellenistic time.

A total of 77 stamps have been found at the excavation of Bereg-IV including: Thasos – 2 items, Rhodes – 9, Kos – 3, Sinope – 51, Herakleia – 6, Bosporos – 2, and unidentified manufacturing centres – 4.

The evidence gained suggests the usual combination of a relatively small number of Thasian and Herakleian stamps at rural settlements of the 2nd half of the 4th century BC. In the last quarter of the 4th century BC also stamped amphorae of Sinope appear. The overwhelming majority of stamped amphorae of the 3rd century AD comes from Sinope, and only in the last quarter of the 3rd century, Rhodian wine appears here. The latter completely dominates the market in the 2nd century BC. By the 3rd–2nd centuries BC, Koan wine appears. In the 1st century BC, the complete predominance of Heracleian wine in amphorae of the ‘pseudo-Koan’ type is already observable at the market.¹⁰

The most unexpected discovery here was that of complexes presumably datable to the Late Bronze Age.¹¹ V. S. Bochkarev attributed them to the Sabatinovka archaeological culture of the 12th–10th centuries BC. These complexes include materials from six stone wells and ten other objects the purpose of which is still not completely clear. At all these objects, chronologically diagnostic, specific moulded handmade pottery was found: scoops with loop-shaped handles (object no. 192), scoops with protrusions on the handles (objects nos. 188–189), handmade black-polished pottery with an accentuated neck (objects nos. 225, 229, 257, 45A, E, D, 55, 145–145A, 156, 199), handmade black-polished vessels with two handles (objects nos. 60, 145).

The following types of buildings are distinguishable:

- 1) stone wells (objects nos. 55, 76D, 226, 220, 145, 192);
- 2) pits up to 5–6 m deep and up to 6–10 m in diameter of unknown purpose (objects nos. 67, 153, 164, 188–189, 194–194A);
- 3) stone structure – ‘reservoir’, adjacent to a stone well (objects nos. 45A–E and 192) (Figs. 3–4).

¹⁰ Sharov–Pavlichenko 2017, 629–631.

¹¹ Sharov 2016 [O. B. Шаров, “Новые комплексы протомеотской эпохи на Тамани”], 127–129.



Fig. 3. Settlement Ilyich-1. Excavation "Bereg IV".
Reservoir and well



Fig. 4. Settlement Ilyich-1. Excavation "Bereg IV".
Reservoir. Masonry of red sandstone

Thus, the excavations at archaeological complexes of the settlement of Ilyich revealed three chronological horizons: of the Late Bronze – Early Iron Age, of the Hellenistic period, and of the early Roman time. The most unique discovery made in 2015–2016 in this region is that of the Late Bronze Age complexes related to the water supply of a large area. Possibly, the large pits (type 2) cut in the layer of ferruginous sandstone also served as water reservoirs, since a layer of black silty clay was traced on their bottom. So far, this is naturally a preliminary supposition.

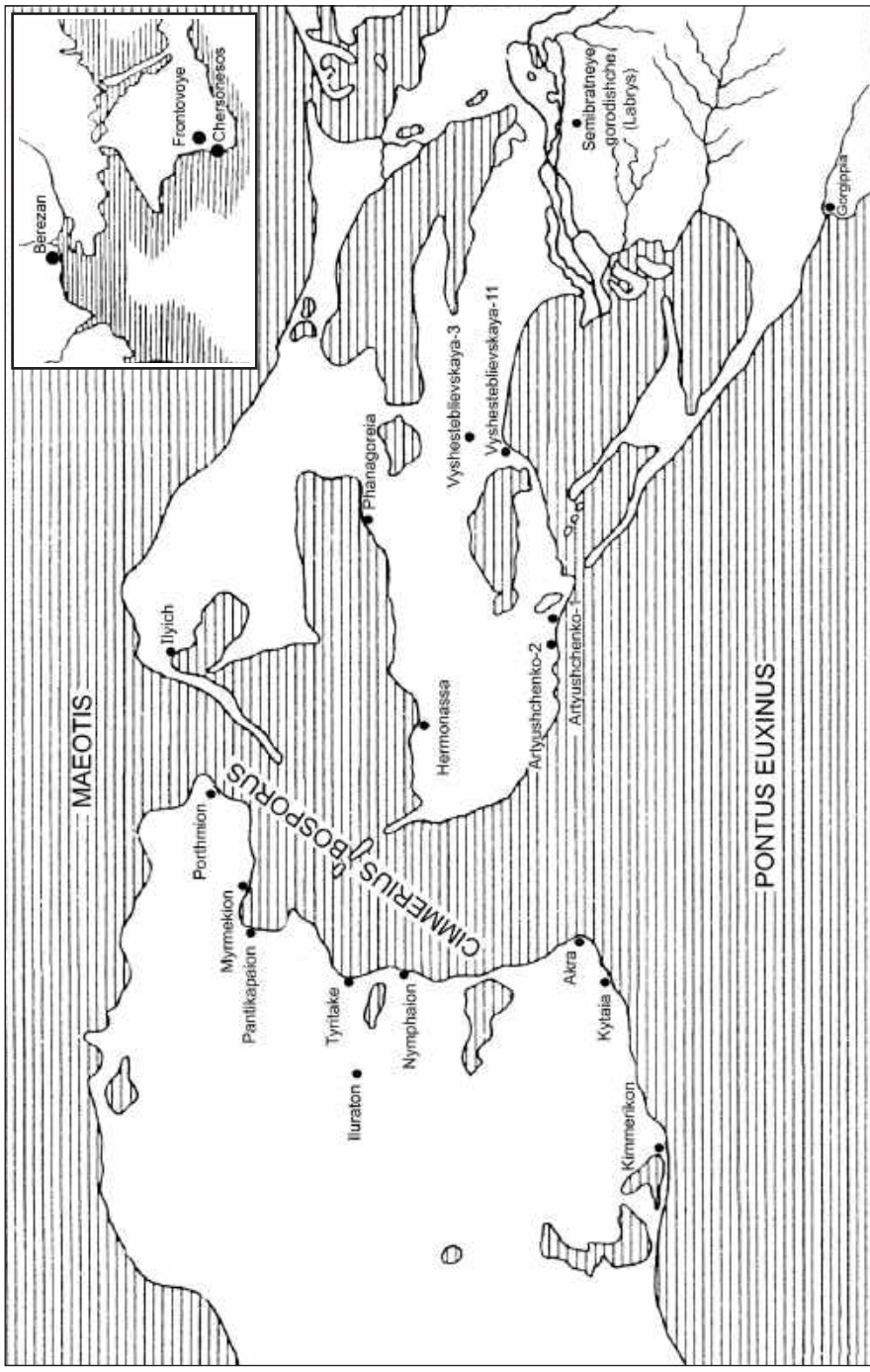
The archaeological complexes we discovered on the Taman Peninsula provide new data about the settlement pattern here in the pre-Greek and Greek period suggesting a very high level of the development of the material culture of the local population.

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