Koguryŏ's Influence on Parhae (Bohai) Culture

E. I. Gelman and V. I. Boldin, Russian Academy of Sciences

Journal of Inner and East Asian Studies volume1

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New archaeological finds can provide fresh insights into various aspects of Koguryŏ culture s influence on the Parhae state. This report focuses on the most prominent striking of Koguryŏ features in archaeological materials from Parhae sites in Russian Maritime Region. The Koguryŏ tradition is reflected in the fortification constructions, heating systems of pit-dwellings and well constructions found at the ancient Parhae walled towns sites. The appearance of the kang with П-shape section makes it possible to connect the Koguryŏ to the Parhae culture development to a certain degree.

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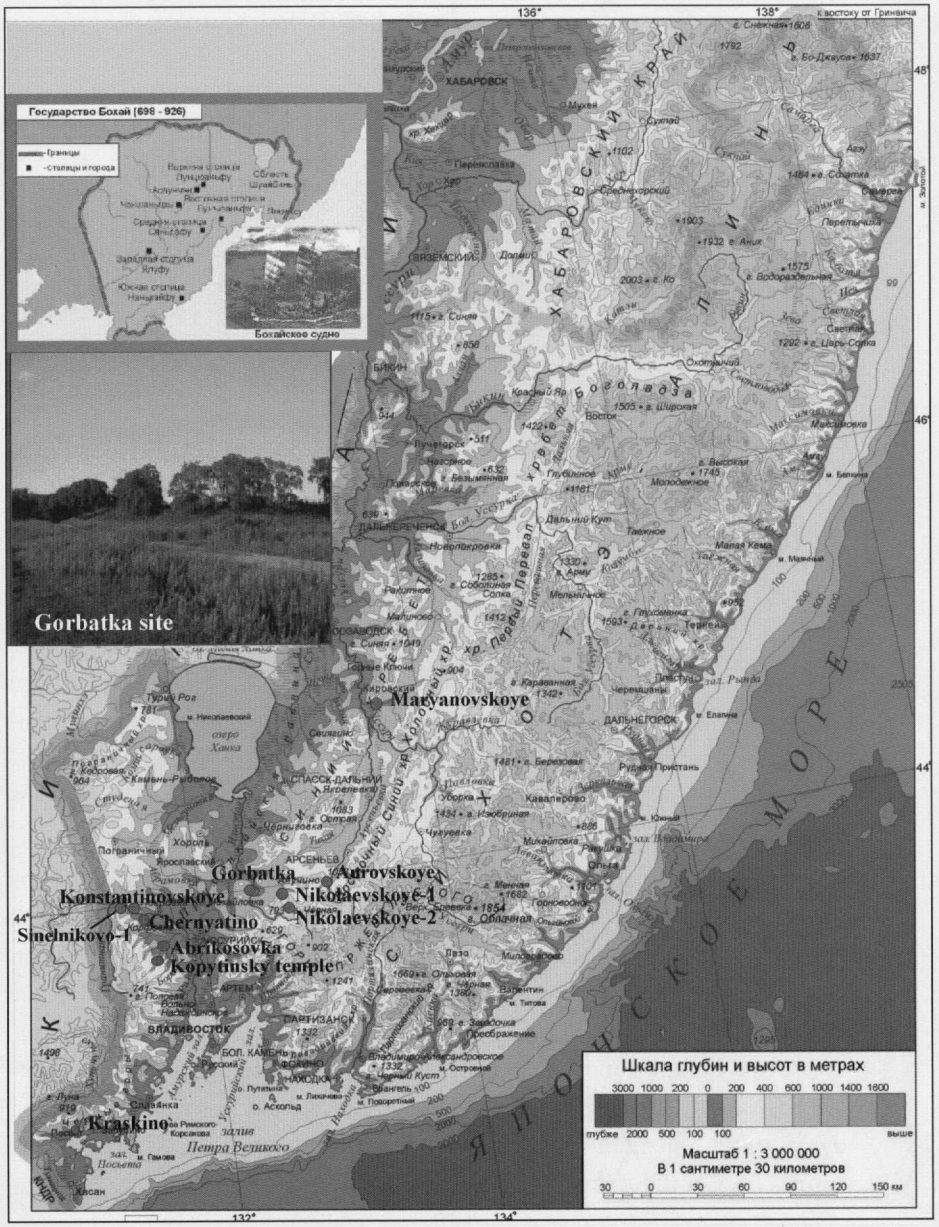
Introduction

During the past ten years an intensive archaeological investigation of the Parhae sites in Russian Maritime Region (fig. 1), including joint excavation efforts with foreign colleagues, gave us new and diverse data on the Parhae culture. Those data permitted a better understanding of Parhae history, and may also help to elucidate the problem of Koguryŏ s influence on the Parhae state. Archaeological records have attracted more and more attention not only of archaeologists, but of historians as well. This is perhaps a result of the medieval chronicles invaluable contribution to our undersanding of the real role the Koguryŏ culture played in the Parhae formation and development. The problem is too complex to be covered here in its entirety, so we will only focus on some striking examples of Koguryŏ manifestations in archaeological materials from Parhae sites in Russian Maritime Region. As we mentioned before, we will pay a particular attention to the following aspects of material culture: the fortification peculiarities, the heating systems in some of the pit-dwellings, and the wells from the Parhae ancient walled towns.

At the present time eighteen Parhae sites have been excavated to a certain degree in Russian Maritime Region. They include nine ancient walled towns, four settlements (without walls), one cemetery, and five Buddhist temples (one of them situated on the territory of ancient walled town). These archaeological sites represent the different stages of the Parhae s development.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столицы и города
Бохайское судно
Gorbatka site
Maryanovskoye
Gorbatka
Antonovskoye
Konstantinovskoye
Nikolaevskoye-1
Chernyatino
Nikolaevskoye-2
Shelnikovo-1
Abrikosovka
Kopytinsky temple
Kraskino
ХАБАРОВСКИЙ КРАЙ
ХАБАРОВСК
ВЛАДИВОСТОК
Шкала глубин и высот в метрах
Масштаб 1 : 3 000 000
В 1 сантиметре 30 километров

fig.1

Fortification Constructions

Investigators usually divide the Parhae ancient walled towns into two groups: mountain and valley (lowland) towns (fig. 1). The first group includes the Sinelnikovskoye, Novogordeevskoye and Aurovskoye walled towns, and the second group includes the Kraskinskoye, Nikolaevskoye-I,

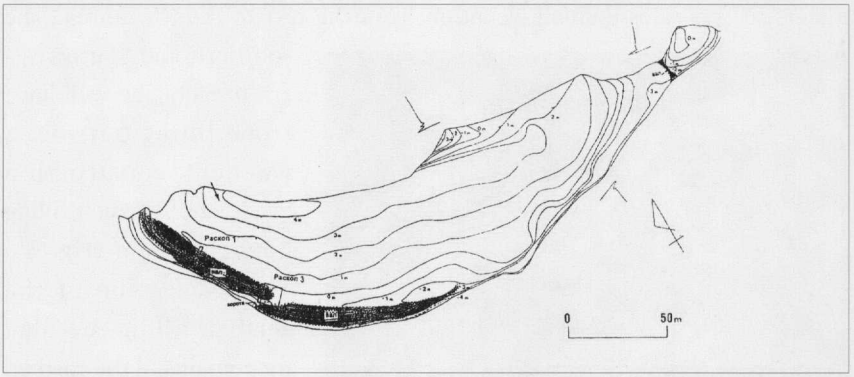


fig.2

Nikolaevskoye-II, Gorbatka, Starorechenskoye and Maryanovskoye walled towns. Both groups include the sites (Novogordeevskoye and Maryanovskoye ancient towns) where the Jurchens rebuilt a significant part of of the Parhae fortifications during the Chin period (1115-1234), but these sites lack reliable records describing their fortification constructions during the Parhae period. One of the ancient walled towns (Starorechenskoye) lacks the walls at the present time, and it is doubtful that the walls existed in the past though some archaeologists assume that the nearby river may have destroyed those together with the most other parts of the site.

The ancient mountain towns that the Parhae built represent a high degree of continuation of the Koguryŏ's fortification tradition that show both a skillful adaptation to the mountainous landscape and the use of stone in the construction of the wall. The earliest Parhae walled mountain town is Sinelnikovskoe (Boldin 2001) in the valley of the Razdolnaya (Suifun) River. It stands on the mostly flat but gently sloping top of the hill on the right bank of the river (figs. 1-2). The boundaries of the walled town coincide with the contours of the hilltop, and Sinelnikovskoye occupies about

1.3 hectares. Although the perimeter of the site is almost 700 meters, the length of the walls covers only 185 meters because the southwest side is the only place that requires a defensive fortification; a steep rocky cliff protects the site in the north and northeast. The eastern wall was earthen and almost symbolic. The height of the wall at the present time is 0.5 meters, and the width at the base reaches 3 meters. The length of the eastern wall is 12 meters; it separates a small elevation from the rest of the town area. The southern and southwestern parts of the wall have stone lining outside, a wooden construction inside, and earthen filling between them (fig. 3). The excavation of the earthen filling revealed the remains of the earthen Mohe (Malgal) wall containing Mohe ceramic fragments. The total height of the wall s outer side on the steep slope of the hill reaches 2.5 meters. The height of the wall on the inside is 0.5 meters, and the width of the wall at the base reaches 5 meters.

fig. 3

The Sinelnikovskoye walled town has a single gate in the southwestern part of the wall in the form of a corridor between the two parts of the wall. In this case the edges of the wall s parts do not meet and are parallel to each other (fig. 4). The walls at the gate area feature the stone lining both outside and inside. From the gate, an ancient road goes northward along the wall.

Another ancient walled mountain town, Aurovskoye, existed during the last stage of the Parhae state and into the post-Parhae period (Shavkunov and Gelman 2002). The town stands on the left bank of the Muraveika River, five kilometers before its confluence with the Arsenyevka (Dawubihe) River. This walled town occupies the top of a steep hill (figs. 1 & 5), and a rocky outcrop along the mountain ridge divides the site in three parts. The walls are built on the easily accessible parts of the hill, but no trace of the

fig. 4

wall was found on precipitous slopes. The wall s height is about 3 meters. The three gates are in the form of breaks in the walls, but the walls are thicker near those breaks. The walls at Aurovskoye are built solely of crude stone with no earthen filling.

We can consider the use of stone in wall construction not only as a Koguryŏ trait in mountain towns but as a feature inherent in the Parhae walled towns as well. The known Mohe fortresses of the preceding period and the Jurchen walled mountain towns of Eastern Xia (1215-1233) all have walls made exclusively of earth. Moreover, the Jurchen s preferred the system of additional earthen walls erected outside of town to ensure more security in vulnerable places. The Parhae walled mountain towns lack such a system although additional walls do appear on some of the valley sites. The Jurchen walled towns also feature rounded turrets and semicircle defense constructions at the gates.

The fortifications in the Parhae walled valley towns are built of stone, and the walls on those sites have stone cover on both sides and earthen filling in between. However, we can see some variations among the valley walled towns and divide them into the following two subgroups:

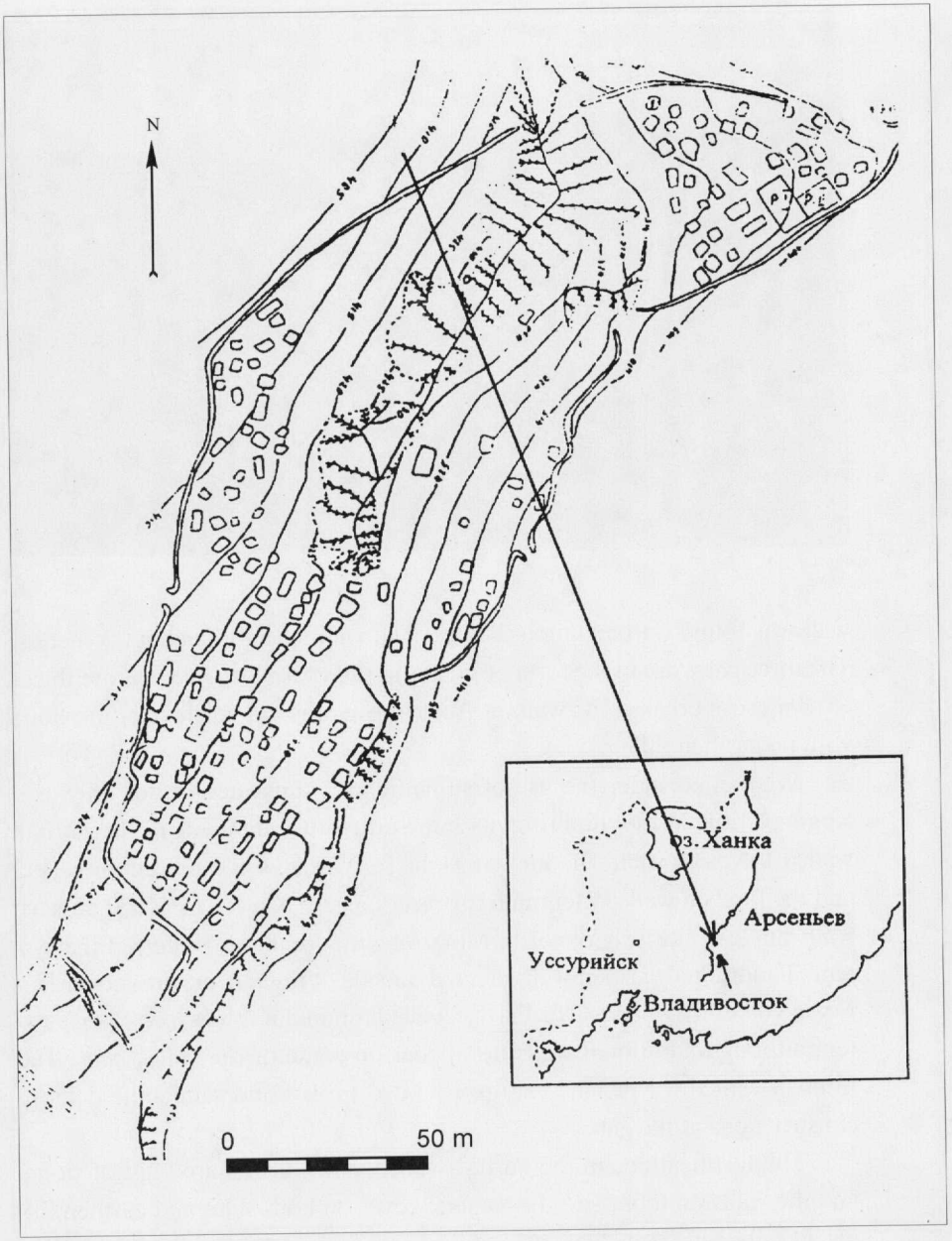


fig. 5

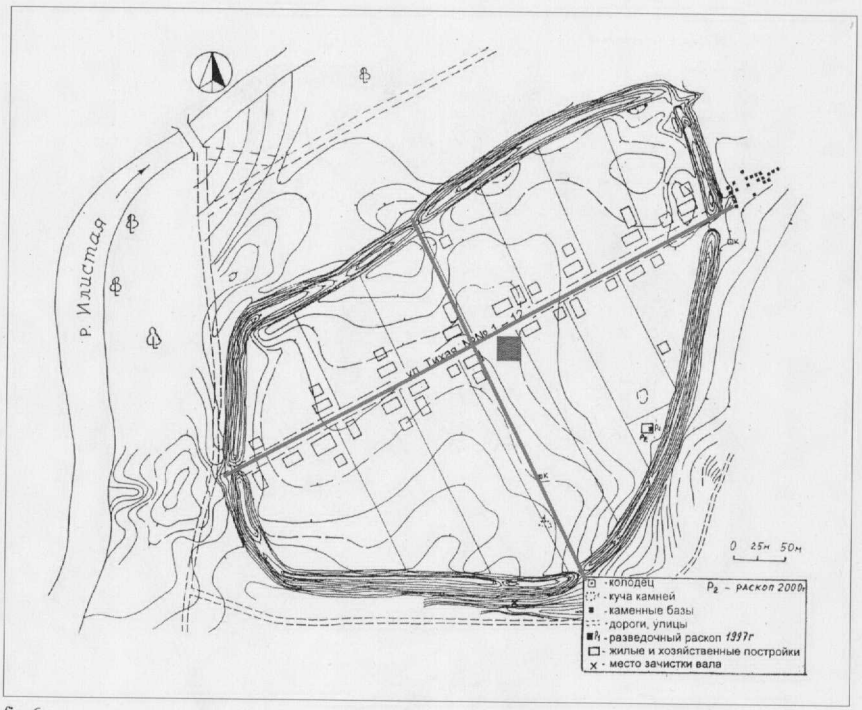


fig. 6

A) Sites with the walls built of crude large pebbles;

B) Sites with the walls built of stone blocks (stones processed to relatively proper shapes).

The subgroup A includes Nikolaevskoe-I, Nikolaevskoye-II, and Gorbatka walled towns, and all of these three sites are located in the valley of Ilistaya (Lefu) river that flows into the Khanka Lake. Gorbatka is thought to have been a major administrative center in the valley area because it is the largest site known so far (figs. 1 & 6). The site s outlines are complex, and the shape of the town reflects the local topography. Gorbatka occupies the area of about 10 hectares (Nikolaevskoe I and II are both no more than 5 hectars), and the length of the walls is 1220 meters (Gelman et al. 2001). This ancient town s date goes back to the 9th to the beginning of 10th century. The site has five building horizons, and the walls first appear in the

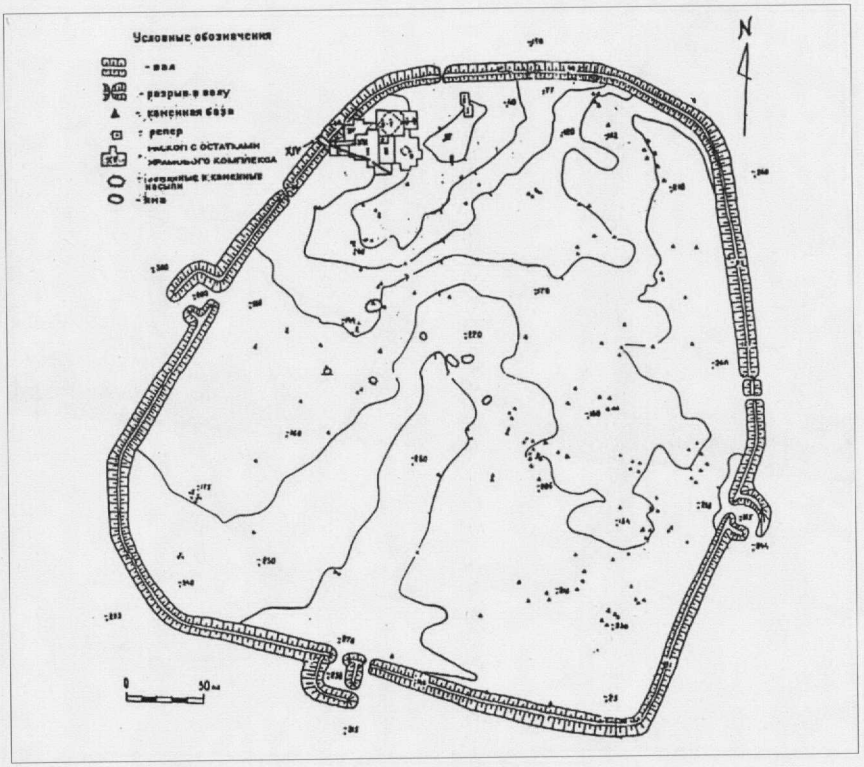


fig. 7

layer positioned above the second building horizon. This may indicate a date of the mid-9th century.

Currently the height of the walls at Gorbatka is 2-2.3 meters on the inside and 4-4.2 meters on the outside; the width of the wall in the base is 10-16 meters, and 2.5 meters at the top. No less than seven lines of stone blocks make up an outer coating of the wall. At the base of the wall there are rectangular water sinks. There are four gates on the site of Gorbatka, and all are in the form of break in the wall.

The subgroup B includes the Kraskinskoye walled town only (figs. 1, 7-8), and it occupies an area of approximately 12 hectares. Until now, the Kraskino represents the only Parhae sites in the Russian Maritime Region where processed stones were used in a similar fashion as those found at Koguryŏ fortresses (Boldin et al 2001; Ivliev 2004). The processed stone

fig. 8

makes up the lower part of the wall, and the excavations of the western part of the wall revealed a drain that was built after the wall (figs. 9-10). Both the outer and inner sides of the wall are covered with stones in the lower or more ancient part of the fortification. The outer stone cover extends upwardly to the height of 2.6 meters and its surface consists of 8-9 lines of stone blocks. The height of the inner cover is 1.1-1.2 meters with 6-7 lines of stone blocks. The excavations of the east gate area at the Kraskinskoye site showed us that the making of the wall s lower portion (the one with the stonework sidewalls and earthen filling in between) was some time later followed by the additional reinforcement of the gate with a rectangular shape construction. This construction had a passage in it where a cobblestone road approached to. In the eastern wall we spotted the remains of a rectangular turret (2.4 x 3 meters), but the turret was apparently a later addition to the wall as the stones it was built of differed from those in the wall (fig. 11).

The site of Kraskino most probably suffered from frequent flooding. Gradually the soil brought by water was deposited inside as well as outside of the town area. Consequently, the ground level rose, and the visible part of the wall have become shorter. Thus, the wall was upgraded in the Parhae period by adding more pebble and earth layers on the top of the wall (fig.

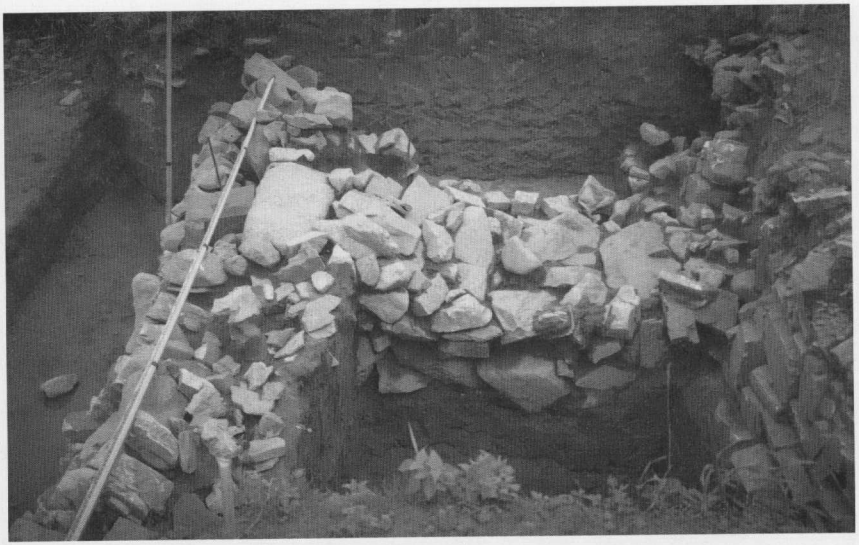
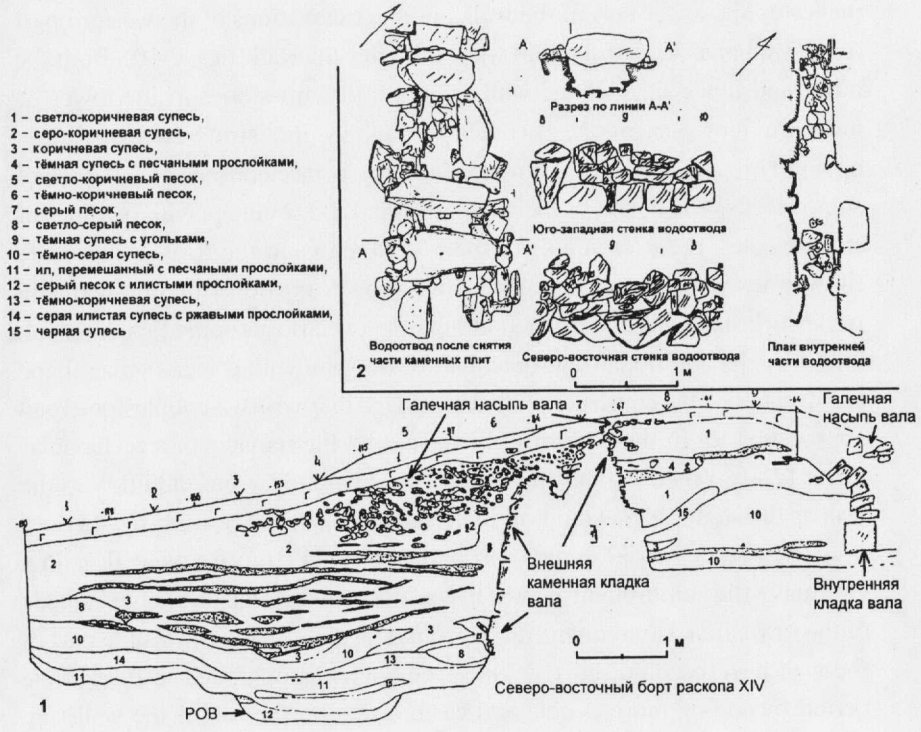


fig. 9


1 – светло-коричневая супесь,
2 – серо-коричневая супесь,
3 – коричневая супесь,
4 – тёмная супесь с песчаными прослойками,
5 – светло-коричневый песок,
6 – тёмно-коричневый песок,
7 – серый песок,
8 – светло-серый песок,
9 – тёмная супесь с угольками,
10 – тёмно-серая супесь,
11 – ил, перемешанный с песчаными прослойками,
12 – серый песок с илистыми прослойками,
13 – тёмно-коричневая супесь,
14 – серая илистая супесь с ржавыми прослойками,
15 – черная супесь
Разрез по линии А-А'
Юго-западная стенка водоотвода
Водоотвод после снятия части каменных плит
Северо-восточная стенка водоотвода
План внутренней части водоотвода
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2
Галечная насыпь вала
Галечная насыпь вала
Внешняя каменная кладка вала
Внутренняя кладка вала
0 1 м
Северо-восточный борт раскопа XIV
1
РОВ

fig. 10

fig. 11

10). At the present time the height of the walls as measured inside the site is 1-1.5 meters, and about 2.5 meters outside. The width of the walls at their tops reaches 1 meter, while in the base, it is 10-12 meters.

The fortifications on most known Parhae sites throughout the Maritime Region in Russia evince the continuation of the Koguryŏ traditions in the Parhae town-building practices. Those traditions are reflected in the making of both mountain and valley walled towns. Both types possess many common features. The town borders usually do not constitute a proper geometric figure because they were made to follow the natural shape of the landscape. For the same reason, the number of gates varies too. The walls are made of stone, and the size of the Parhae ancient walled town depended on its political status.

The category of mountain walled towns includes both small refuge fortresses like the site of Sinelnikovskoye and the large ones like Aurovskoye with its permanent population. The case of Aurovskoye is interesting in that the town site is divided in three parts the way some Koguryŏ fortresses are. The walls in the mountain towns were built in selected vulnerable places only. On the steep slopes, walls were unnecessary and thus were not built. At best, the walls were very low, appear symbolic. The wall construction in

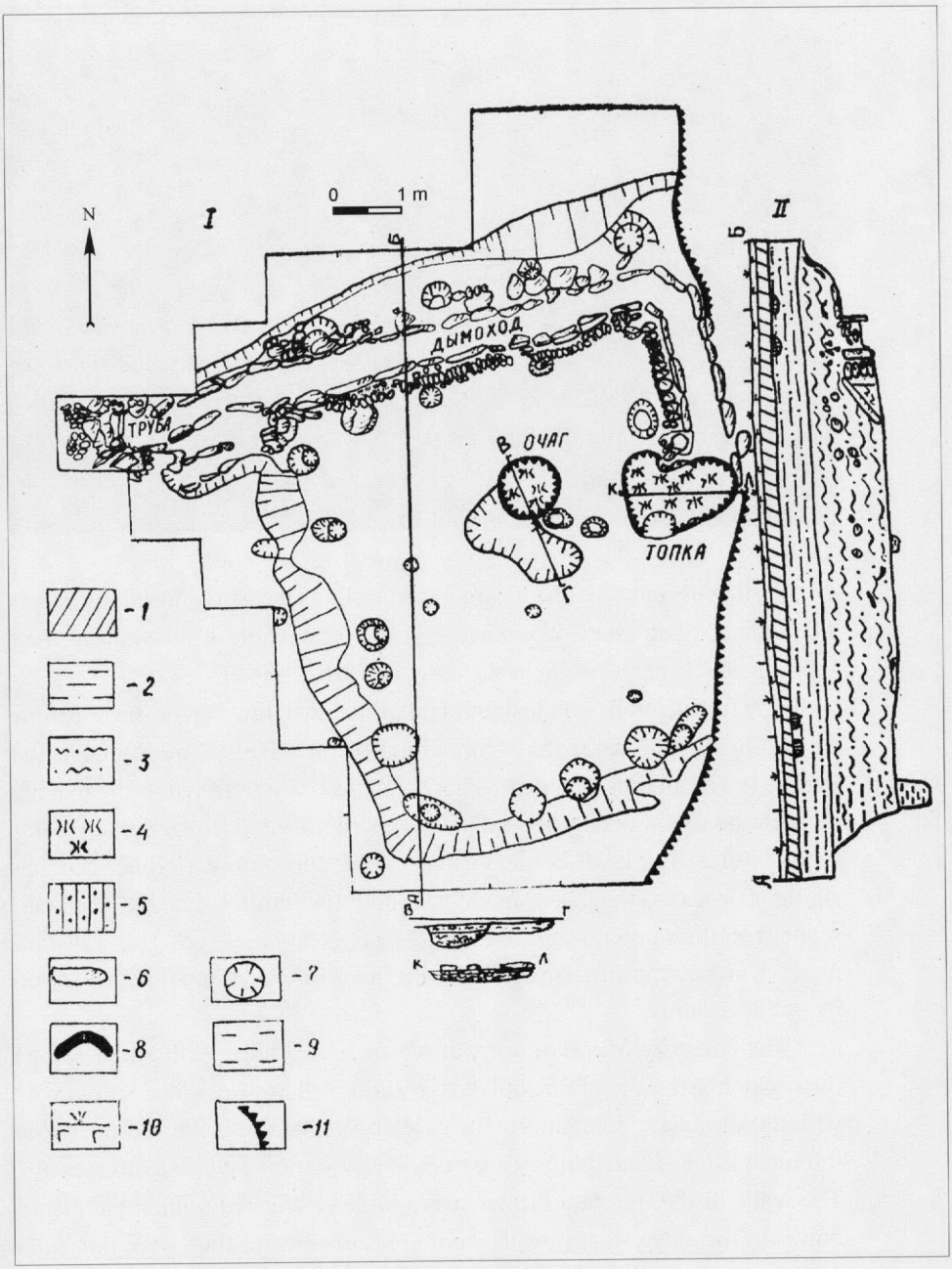
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fig. 12

one case featured a stone coating with earthen filling, while in another case stone was the sole building material.

The walls in the Parhae valley towns were covered with stones on the inside and outside, with earthen filling between them. The stone material includes both pebbles and processed and properly shaped blocks. At the foot of the walls there are drainage ditches required for the rainy season. The gates in valley walled towns were made in the form of gaps in the walls, but could also be accompanied by additional defense constructions as in the case of Kraskinskoe ancient town. The latter yielded the rectangular turrets, the first occurrence among the Parhae walled towns in the Russian Maritime Region. The turret resembled the Koguryŏ type but was of smaller size. We thus have an example of the Parhae builder s creative approach to the Koguryŏ heritage.

Dwellings

The question of the Koguryŏ s influence on the development of the Parhae culture needs to pay a special attention to the Parhae dwellings with the *kang* heating system. Although such dwellings have not been excavated at all sites, it is possible to note an exclusive feature of the Parhae *kang* that makes it similar to the Koguryŏ *kang* while distinguishing it from the Jurchen *kang*. The walls of the flues are made of stone slabs vertically sunken into the floor; another flat slab covers the vertical ones in a manner that resembles the letter. The whole construction is covered with a thick layer of clay, and the dwellings with such type of *kang* have been found at three sites so far.

One of the dwellings was excavated in the Konstantinovskoye settlement. The Konstantinovskoye site is located in the valley of Razdolnaya (Suiphun) River. The site probably existed through all stages associated with the Parhae time (fig. 1). The dwelling area was 49 square meters, and the depth of the pit-dwelling was about 1 meter (The Parhae state & 1994, 75, 76). The *kang* had a single L-shaped flue (fig. 12). The width of the flue was 0.5 meter and the width of the *kang* was almost 1 meter. The square-shaped stone base of the chimney has also survived. Tiles with the net décor on their

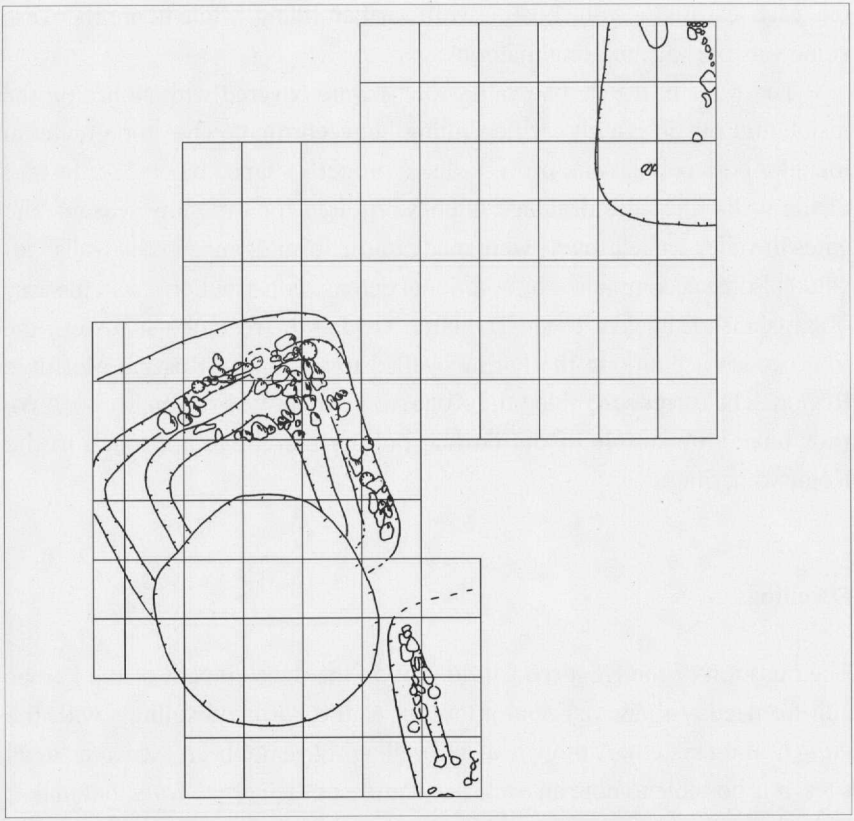

fig. 13

convex surface covered the dwelling s roof.

Five dwellings with *kang* were partly excavated in Gorbatka walled town, but only one was excavated extensively that provides us with an example of how the *kang* was built (fig. 13). The excavated dwelling was about 16 square meters in size and had a П-shaped *kang* with two flues. The width of the flues was 20-25 cm, and the width of the *kang* reached 80-100 cm. The round base of the chimney was preserved too and measured 60 cm in diameter. The chimney featured the framework of wooden rods and some pebbles in the base. The amount of pebbles used in the making of the *kang* in the Gorbatka walled town was obviously less than that in the *kang* of the Konstantinovskoye settlement. That is why the stones were complemented

by the wooden framework the carbonized traces of which have been preserved in the dwelling s floor. The depth of the clay coating of the *kang* was up to 10 cm.

Seven dwellings that measured 20-36 cm were excavated completely in the Aurovskoye walled town (fig. 14). All had the L-shaped *kang* systems

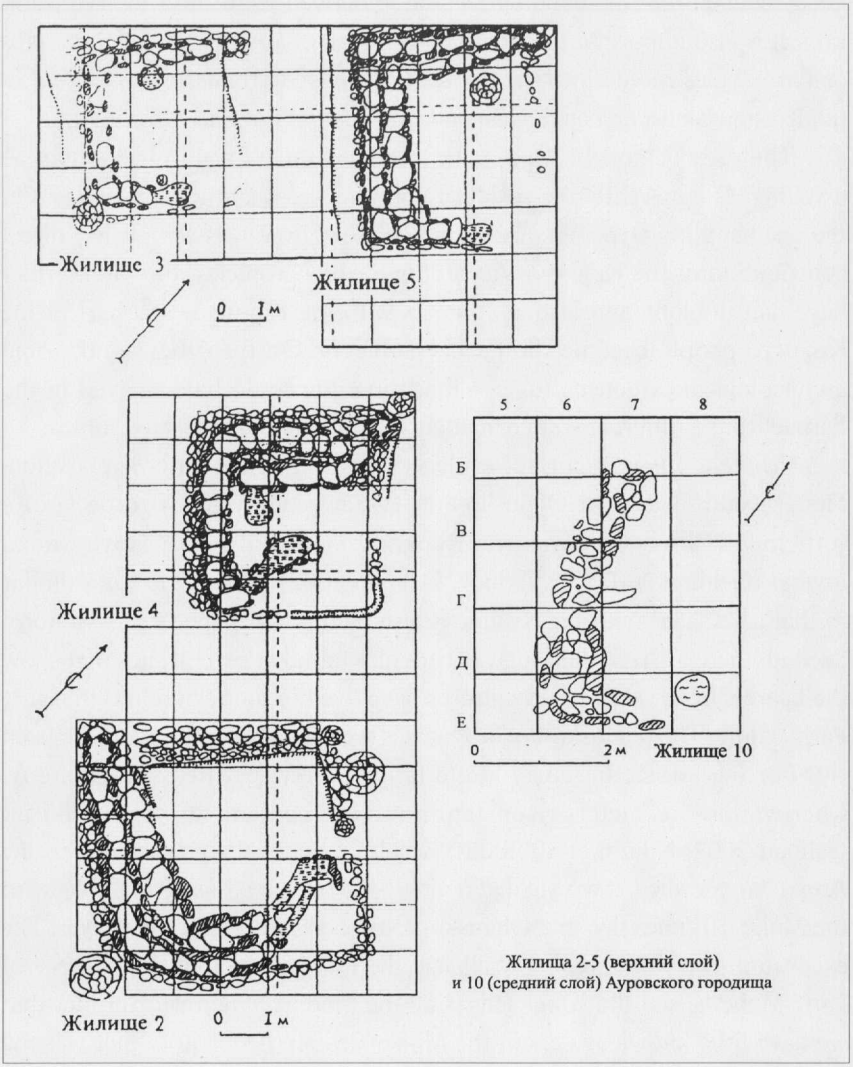

fig. 14

with two flues. Very large stone slabs were used to build the *kang*, and almost every dwelling contained the remains of a chimney 50 cm in diameter standing on a circular stone base.

The above cases of the Parhae dwellings showed that from the early to the later Parhae times and then on to the post-Parhae period, the Parhae *kang* retained the flue-building technique derived from the Koguryŏ tradition. It is also important to note that such type of *kang* (vertical stone slabs or flat pebbles rooted into the floor; the П-shaped cross-section) existed in the Krounovskaya archaeological culture (Tuantze) of Early Iron Age.

The presence of the *kang* with П-shaped cross-section in the Parhae dwellings is apparently the result of complex cross-cultural processes. On the one hand, this type of *kang* in the Parhae culture was obviously a direct contribution of the Koguryŏ. According to the chronicles, the Mohe tribes have had the long and lasting contacts with the Koguryŏ, and part of the Koguryŏ people became the Parhae subjects. On the other hand, some archaeological evidences suggest that the *kang* could have arrived in the Parhae from a different source, namely from the Krounovkskaya culture.

There are two important evidences in favor of the latter supposition. First, several sites of the Olginsko-Poltsevskaya culture (Novogordeevskoye settlement, Novogordeevskoye, Rudanovskoye and Aurovskoye walled towns) (Gelman 2002; Shavkunov, Gelman 2002) yielded the *kang* similar to that associated with the Krounovskaya culture (П-shaped cross-section). Second, there are new data such as ceramics found at several sites that show the bearers of the mentioned cultures have lived in the region into the early Parhae time. The Olginsko-Poltse features are traceable in the ceramics from the Parhae sites, the early stage layer (Chernyatino-2 settlement, Chernyatino-5 cemetery, Konstantinovskoye settlements etc.) (Nikitin, Gelman 2002; Nikitin et al. 2002). Besides, one dwelling excavated in the Aurovskoye walled town yielded a single-flue e-shaped *kang* together with the Mohe, Krounovsky, and Olginsko-Poltse ceramics in the same layer. The excavations on this dwelling challenge the assumption that the absence of *kang* Mohe lacked the *kang*. This is all the more so when we consider that we have little knowledge about the Mohe sites on the territory that was the first to come under the Parhae control. In view of the simultaneous occur-

rence of wheel-made pottery and copious handmade Mohe ceramics, it may be a mistake to rely on the wheel-made pottery to date the early Parhae sites. The Mohe tribes actively communicated with the Koguryŏ and the Chinese, and they were probably well acquainted with the potter s wheel and the *kang* long before the emergence of the Parhae State. Thus, we may encounter in the future regional variations in the construction of the Parhae *kang*.

Wells

At the present time we know about three Parhae wells. One was excavated in the Supreme Capital of the Parhae (Tuy 1979, 66-67), the second in the Kraskinskoye walled town, and the third in the Gorbatka walled town. The well at the Kraskinskoye site was dug in the middle stage. The depth of the well is nearly 3 meters (figs. 15-16), and the upper part of the well shaft is circular in shape, with the lower part in a square-shape (Gelman et al. 2000). The diameter of the upper part at different levels is 70-115 cm, and

fig. 15

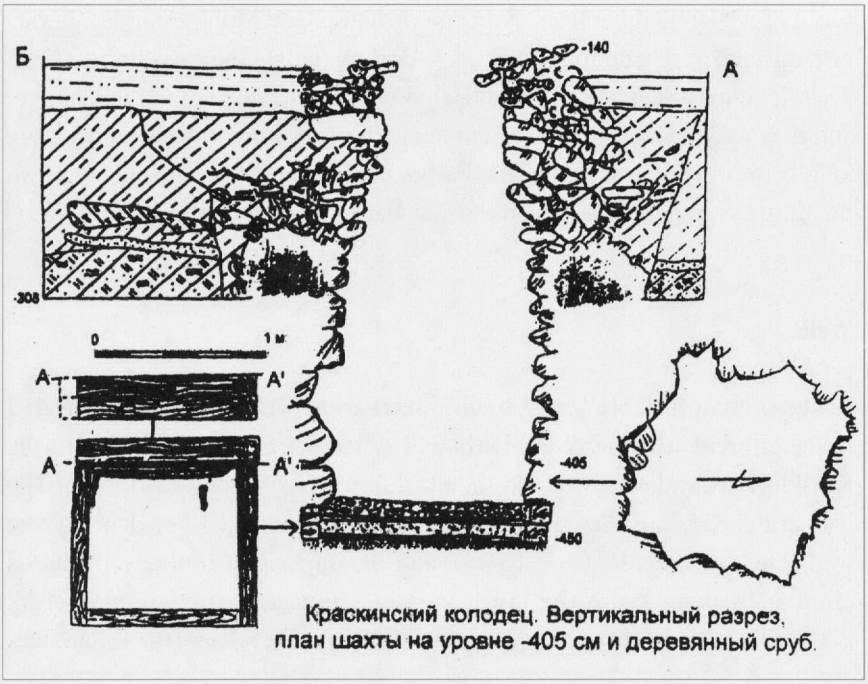

fig. 16

one side of the square measures 115 cm. The corners of the Kraskinskii well are oriented in cardinal points. The well was located near the tile kilns and possibly built for the needs of tile-making in the first place. The well was built of stones mixed with the worn or waste tiles, and only the inner well ring and the lower square shaft were built using whole stones. The entire construction was being made while resting on a square wooden frame that combined two lines of bars 14-15 cm of thickness. The bottom of the well had a pebble coating under which a sieve of singular design, namely a sand layer between two wickerwork meshes attached to an oaken frame, was found. All of the wooden parts of the well were in a state of fair preservation (fig. 17). The well contained more than twenty vessels, unbroken and fragmented tiles, two species of nut, grape seeds, an apple, fragments of sea mollusks, insects, and so on. The excavations at the bottom of the well yielded a single Parhae wooden cup, a ceramic saucer, a hexahedral fragment of a vessel, and a big pig-shaped jar.

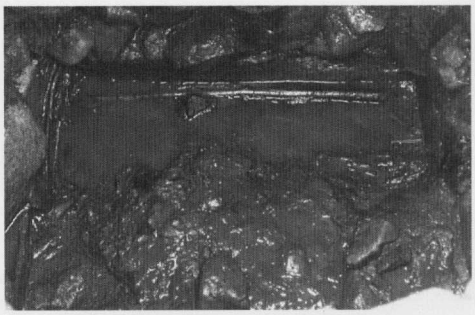
fig. 17

In 2004 the authors, with a collaborative support of Korean colleagues from Koguryo Research Foundation, conducted the excavations in the Gorbatka ancient walled town. An important result of our work was the discovery of a well associated with the upper building horizon (fig. 18). The depth of the well was almost 3 meters, and the building material was solely stone. The well shaft is circular in the upper part (90 cm in diameter) although its mouth was square. The bottom part of the shaft was also almost square shaped and measured 94x98 cm (figs. 19-20). The corners of the lower part of the well, the same way it is with the Kraskinskii, are oriented in cardinal points. Beneath the stonework, downward to the natural pebble floor at the bottom, the bare well sides expose the layers of clay and dense ferriferous sand. The height of this portion of the well is 60-80 cm; the sides were once covered with wooden planks arranged in four lines. Those planks were 15-20 cm wide, 3-5 cm thick. Most wooden parts of the well were burnt; this could have happened when the well dried up, but some of the wooden parts have survived. The contents of the well itself yielded animal bones including a horse jaw, wild pig fangs, and ceramic shards, and we found at the pit where the well was built a pan-iron similar to the one from the Kraskinskoye walled town.


fig. 18

The wells discovered at the Parhae walled towns in the Maritime Region of Russia are very similar to the Koguryŏ well excavated in P'yŏngyang (*Kang* 1986, 38-39). The latter

fig. 19

was found 3 km south of the Tesonan wall in the Kosan quarter (fig. 21). The depth of the Koguryŏ well was 9 m. That well also featured a wooden base in the lower part, the stonework lining in the shaft, the rounded shape at the upper part, the octahedral shape at the middle, and the square shape at the lower part of the well. The diameter of the shaft in its lower part was 115 cm, 120 cm in the middle, and 105 cm at the top. The square-shaped wooden frame was constructed of logs 15 cm in diameter and more than 1 m in length. The Koguryŏ well, like the Kraskinskii well, yielded the remains of ceramic pots (more than 30 items), pieces of tiles, bricks, iron and bronze artifacts. Among the organic remains found in the well were fragmented mollusks, bones and horns of the deer, and peach stones.

The Parhae and Koguryŏ wells show many common features. One of the most obvious features was the combination of rounded upper part and squared lower part of the well shaft. Another common feature was the use of two types of building material, i.e. stone in the shaft and wood in the base. Furthermore, it is impossible to ignore the almost identical sizes of certain well elements: the length of the squared portion of the shaft in both the Kraskinskii and in Koguryŏ wells

fig. 20

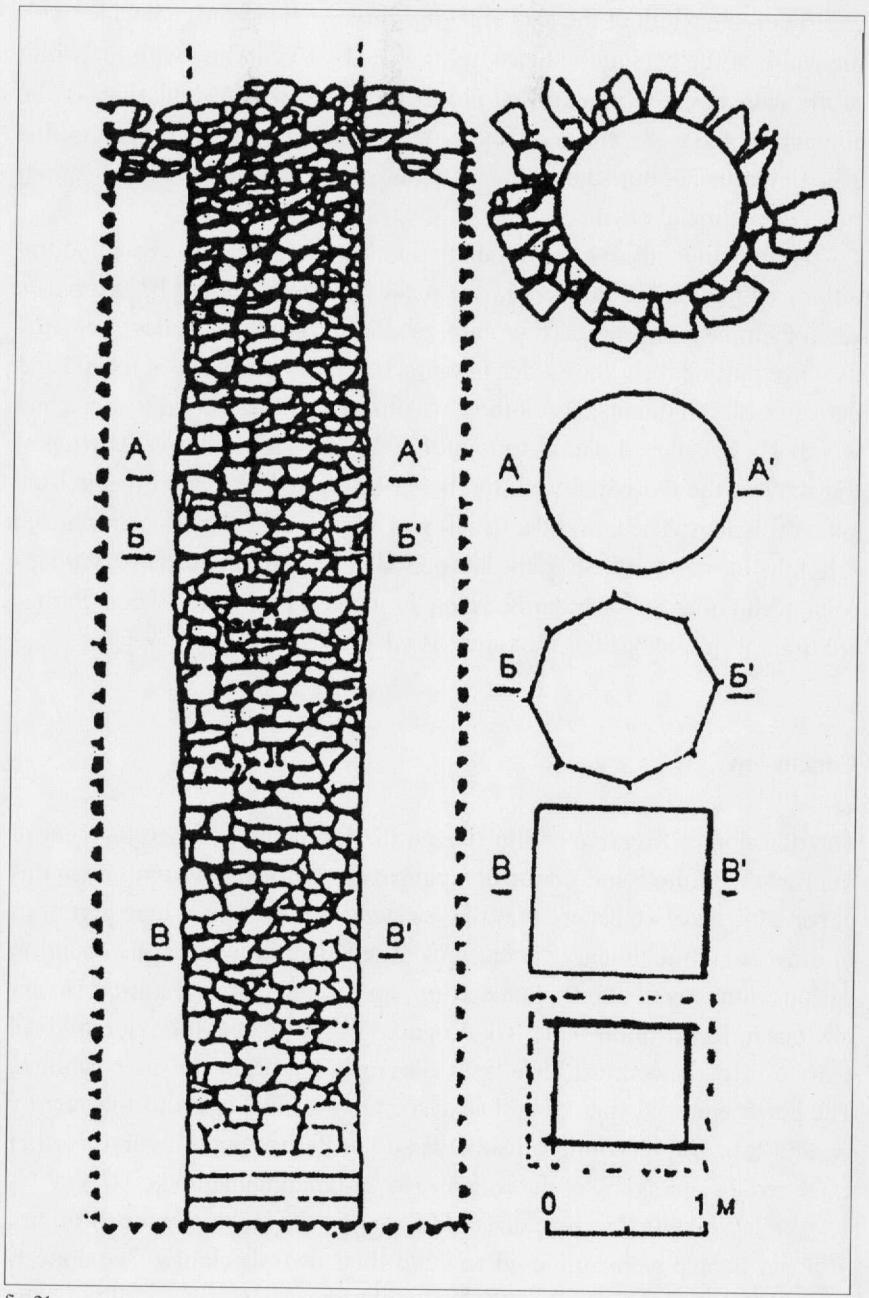

fig. 21

is 115 cm, the width of the logs in the Koguryŏ well (15 cm) coincides with the width of the bars in the Kraskinskii well (14-15 cm) and with the width of the slabs in the Gorbatka well (15-20†cm). As for the similarities in the contents of the wells, those can be perceived as a matter of course, routine everyday rubbish, but some items may have been placed there after certain ritual or sacrificial practices.

At the same time, we do not think that the adoption of the Koguryŏ traditions by the Parhae builders in the making of wells should be taken as a case of simple replication. To be sure, the Parhae builders displayed creativity when putting their knowledge into practice. They made use of the old and defective tiles in the making of the Kraskinskii well in addition to stone and wood. They preferred planks to reinforce the walls of the lowest portion of the shaft in the Gorbatka well, the better solution with regard to the local geomorphology. The Gorbatka s shaft was a bit smaller than the Kraskinskii s, but the former was built in the last period of the Parhae existence. Perhaps some techniques and standards, being an integral part of the whole Parhae cultural fabric, changed as the time passed.

Conclusion

The question of Koguryŏ s influence on the formation and development of the Parhae culture is indeed too complex to be analyzed in its entirety in this paper. However, we believe that the selected cases presented here permit us to draw some preliminary conclusions. The Koguryŏ features are found in various domains of the Parhae culture, and the Koguryŏ tradition is very obvious in fortification skills. The Koguryŏ s expertise built on hundreds of years of experience must have been extremely important for its neighbors. The newly emerged state of Parhae desperately needed to protect its territory, and topographic similarities between the Parhae and Koguryŏ further catalyzed the spreading of the Koguryŏ town-building methods.

While a qualified technician could supervise the making of fortifications, ordinary people were supposed to build their own dwellings. The appearance of the Koguryŏ *kang* in Parhae could be related to the influx of the

Koguryŏ people during the process of formation and development of the Parhae culture. However, we must be careful to note that the Krounovskii and later Olginsko-Poltse culture bearers in the Parhae region had the similar type of the *kang* even before Parhae. The Koguryŏ *kang* probably also derives from the Krounovskii *kang* because the Krounovskii sites are found throughout North Hamgyŏng Region of Korea (Vostretsov 1996, 1999). Therefore, we have yet to separate the Parhae *kang* of the Koguryŏ descent from that of the Krounovski origin.

Our knowledge of the wells in the Koguryŏ and Parhae sites are even less than that of the dwellings. However, we are able to show some distinct similarities in their basic construction methods, building materials, and size standards. Can a building method observed in the well construction be taken as a unique characteristic of a particular culture? Or could the basic principles in well s construction be more or less constant in all ethnic environments? Answers to these and other related questions will require further excavations and studies.

There are several equally interesting examples of Koguryŏ's manifestation in various domains of the Parhae culture that were not dealt with in this report. They include Parhae crafts (particularly pottery, tile production, etc.), arms, religious buildings, and arts. Each of these cultural aspects requires works of meticulous researchers. As any advancement in our understanding of the cultural links between the Koguryŏ and Parhae would be impossible without constant enrichment of archaeological data, it is urgent that we make more intensive excavation efforts.

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