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NEW SETTLEMENT OF HOLERCANI-HANSCA CULTURAL HORIZON IN REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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ABSTRACT

As a result of field surveys of the last years, the new site of Holercani-Hansca cultural group – Andreevca-I settlement has been found. *The purpose of this research paper* is the characteristics of the mentioned site and the interim results of its study.

Results. Andreevca-I settlement is located in Orhei raion of the Republic of Moldova, at the lands of Chiperceni Community. The site is located 0.38 km northeast of the village of Andreevca and 0.28 km northwest of the pond of the village of Andreevca; on the left bank of the stream Vorotet. The settlement is located on a smooth slope. The land area of the settlement along the line North-West-South-East is 100x200 m. Fragments of ceramics, bones of animals, pieces of burnt clay, and different stones, some of them with traces of processing, were found on the plowed surface. The settlement is multilayered. The ceramics of the Late Bronze Age prevail in the materials of the settlement. It is associated with Holercani-Hansca cultural group (12th – 10th century BCE), interim between the cultures of the early Hallstatt, and the Late Bronze Age.

According to O.G. Levitskiy, Holercani-Hansca group fills the gap between the cultural formations of Pre-Babadag and Tămăoani type and Balta group of sites of the Late Bronze Age. In addition, Hallstatt horizon with prevailing incised ceramics, which can be conventionally called Tămăoani-Holercani-Balta, is distinguished. Chronological framework of this horizon according to analogues of Balta group and Tămăoani can be the end of the 12th – 10th century BCE. The closest analogues to this cultural formation could be the cultures of the Lower Danube region – Sihleanu, Tămăoani, Pre-Babadag, Babadag-I, and early Belozerka culture sites, including Balta group of the Late Bronze Age. The role of Chisinau-Corlateni type sites, of which Holercani-Hansca group had got a number of material borrowings while forming its cultural entity, is doubtless.

Keywords: cultural group Holercani-Hansca, Andreevca-I, settlement, ceramics, surface, Bronze Age

НОВЕ ПОСЕЛЕННЯ КУЛЬТУРНОГО ГОРИЗОНТУ ХОЛЕРКАНЬ-ХАНСКА У РЕСПУБЛІЦІ МОЛДОВА

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АНОТАЦІЯ

Внаслідок польових досліджень останніх років виявлено нову пам'ятку культурної групи Холеркань-Ханска – поселення Андреївка-I. **Метою статті** є характеристика зазначеної пам'ятки та підбиття проміжних підсумків його дослідження.

Результати. Поселення Андреївка I знаходиться в Оргеївському районі Республіки Молдова, на землях комуни Кіперчень. Пам'ятник розташований за 0,38 км на північний схід від села Андреївка, і за 0,28 км на ПнЗх від штучного водоймища села Андреївка, на лівому березі струмка Воротець. Поселення розташоване на пологому схилі. Площа поселення лінією північний захід – південний схід становить 100×200 м. На розораній поверхні зустрічалися фрагменти кераміки, кістки тварин, шматки обпаленої глини, різні камені, деякі із слідами обробки. Поселення багат шарове. У матеріалах поселення переважає кераміка пізньої бронзової доби, пов'язана з культурною групою Холеркань-Ханска (XII-X ст. до н.е.), проміжною між культурами Раннього Гальштату та Пізнього бронзового віку.

За визначенням О.Г. Левицького, група Холеркань-Ханска заповнює прогалину між культурними утвореннями типу Пребабадаг і Темеоань та Балтською групою пам'яток епохи пізньої бронзи. При цьому виділяється гальштатський горизонт з переважаючою прокресленою керамікою, яку умовно можна назвати Темеоань-Холеркань-Балта. Хронологічними рамками даного горизонту за аналогіями з Балтською групою та Темеоань можуть бути кінець XII – X ст. до н.е. Найближчими аналогіями даному культурному утворенню можуть бути культури Нижнього Подунав'я – Сихлеану, Темеоань, Пребабадаг, Бабадаг-I і ранні білозерські пам'ятники, зокрема і Балтська група епохи пізньої бронзи. Безперечна роль пам'яток типу Кишинеу-Корлетень, від яких група Ханска-Холеркань має низку матеріальних запозичень у формуванні даного культурного утворення.

Ключові слова: культурна група Холеркань-Ханска, Андреївка-I, поселення, кераміка, поверхня, бронзовий вік

INTRODUCTION

The north-eastern periphery of the steppe zone of the Republic of Moldova closely coincides with the conventional line of the boundary steppe and forest-steppe, marked in the direction of Dubasari-Chisinau-Hincesti-Leova. The study of the materials of this borderland, including already well-known sites of the Final Bronze Age – the Early Iron Age Holercani-Hansca, Calfa, Cosnita, Balabanesti, Hansca, Zaicana, Petruncea, etc., attributed either to Belozerka culture or to the fluted Hallstatt of Chisinau type, makes it possible to identify a new 'buffer' horizon formed at the

confluence of Belozerka and Chisinau-Corlateni cultures¹. In its turn, this cultural horizon is a link between the sites of Belozerka culture and Balta group dated to Belozerka time on the territory of Odesa oblast of Ukraine on the Dniester left riverside², as well as in the Buh-Dniester interfluvium. A new group of sites, characterized by ceramics with incised and fluted ornaments, was called Holercani-Hansca³. The same predominantly polished, ornamented ware is also characteristic of Balta cultural group of the Late Bronze Age sites⁴.

Sites of Holercani-Hansca cultural formation occupy areas located on the conventional borderland of the steppe and forest-steppe of the Prut-Dniester interfluvium. On the modern map of the Republic of Moldova, the zone where it is spread is localized in the districts of Yaloveni, Hincesti, Anenii Noi, Criuleni, Orhei, Dubasari, partially extending to the Left Bank Dniester region – Cosnita, Pohrebea (Fig. 1, 2).

The settlements of this cultural formation occupied low forelands, bends of the ravine-gully system, and above floodplain terraces. The thickness of the cultural layer is 0.6-1.4 m. The presence of ground-based dwellings is assumed, there are semi-dugouts in Calfa. The funeral rite, most likely, performed underground burials, according to the materials of the burial ground near the village of Hansca (Yaloveni raion, Moldova)⁵. However, as a result of recent years research, a mound burial rite can be assumed⁶.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

As a result of the field surveys of recent years, a new site of this cultural group has been found. Andreevca-I settlement is located in Orhei raion of the Republic of Moldova, at the lands of Chiperceni Community⁷. The site is located 0.38 km northeast of the village of Andreevca and 0.28 km northwest of the pond of the village of Andreevca; on the left bank of the stream Vorotet (fig. 1, 1). The settlement is located on the smooth hill slope, and it is crossed by the road from the village of Vorotet to the village of Andreevca. The land area of the settlement along the line North-West-South-East is approximately 100×200 m. The fragments of ceramics,

¹ *Levițki O.* Grupul Hansca-Holercani. Aspectul Pruto-Nistrean al complexului hallstian timpuriu cu ceramica incizată // Relation thraco-illiro-helleniques, Actes du XIV Simpoziu International de Thracologie. Baile Herculane-București, 1994. P. 219.

² *Ванчугов В.П.* Балтская группа памятников эпохи поздней бронзы // Материалы по археологии Северо-Западного Причерноморья. Киев, 1983. С. 88-101; *Ванчугов В.П.* Белозерские памятники в Северо-Западном Причерноморье. Киев, 1990. С. 37-39.

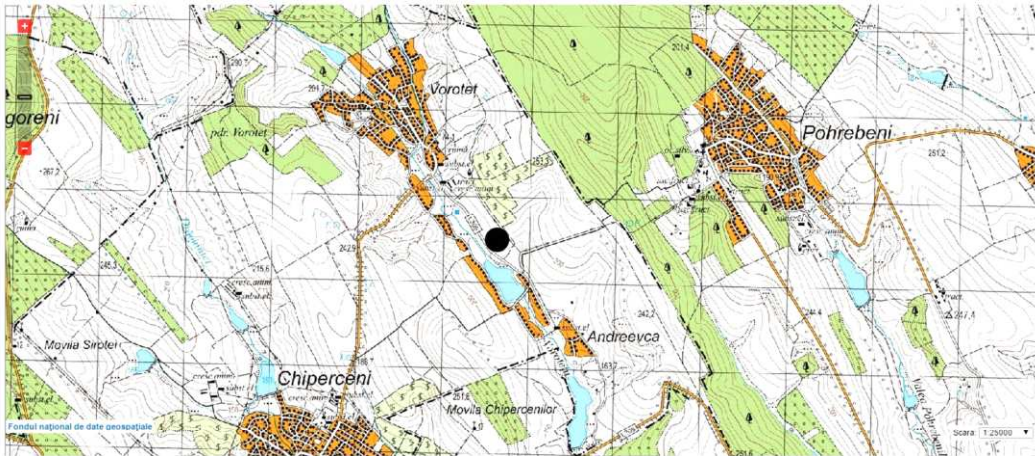
³ *Левицкий О.Г.* К вопросу о раннегалльском горизонте с прочерченной керамикой в Днестровско-Прутском междуречье // Проблемы археологии Северного Причерноморья. Херсон, 1990. С. 6-8; *Levițki O.* Grupul Hansca-Holercani... P. 219-221.

⁴ *Ванчугов В.П.* Раскопки поселения позднего бронзового века Балта в Южном Побужье // Древности Северо-Западного Причерноморья. Киев, 1981. С. 71-83.

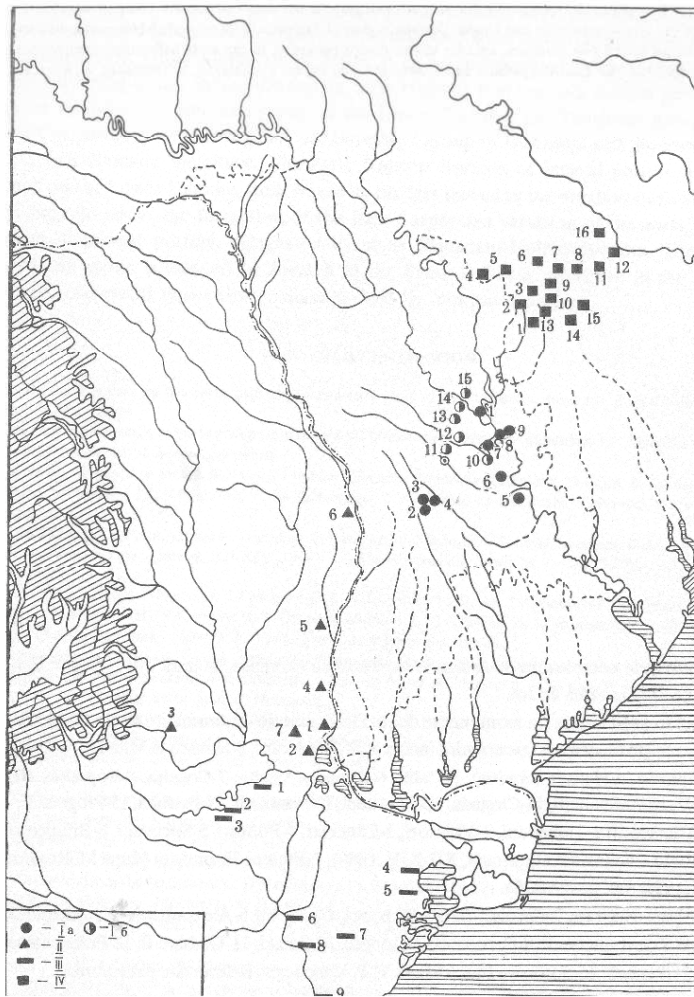
⁵ *Левицкий О.Г.* Погребение раннего железного века у с. Ханска // Археологические Исследования в Молдавии 1981 г. Кишинев, 1985. С. 125-128.

⁶ *Агульников С., Паша В., Попович С.* Охранные исследования раннегалльского могильника Машкэуць-Заверна в 2011 г. // Старожитності Степового Причорномор'я і Криму. Вип. XVI. Запоріжжє, 2012. С. 150-167.

⁷ *Bodean S., Popovici S., Mistreanu E.* Fișa de sit arheologic Andreevca-I // Arhiva Agenția Națională Arheologică. 2015, nr. 271; *Agulnicov S.* Orizontul cultural Holercani-Hansca în situl multistratigrafic Andreevca-I, r-1 Orhei // Arheologie Interdisciplinară, metode, studii, rezultate. Orhei: Vechi, 2022. P. 91-92.



1



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Fig. 1. Andreevca-I, the general layout of the settlement
 1. (for Bodean et al. 2015). 2. Map of Holercani-Hanska sites (for Levițki 1994),
 I – Tămăoani culture sites, II – Holercani-Hanska culture sites, III – Balta cultural group sites.

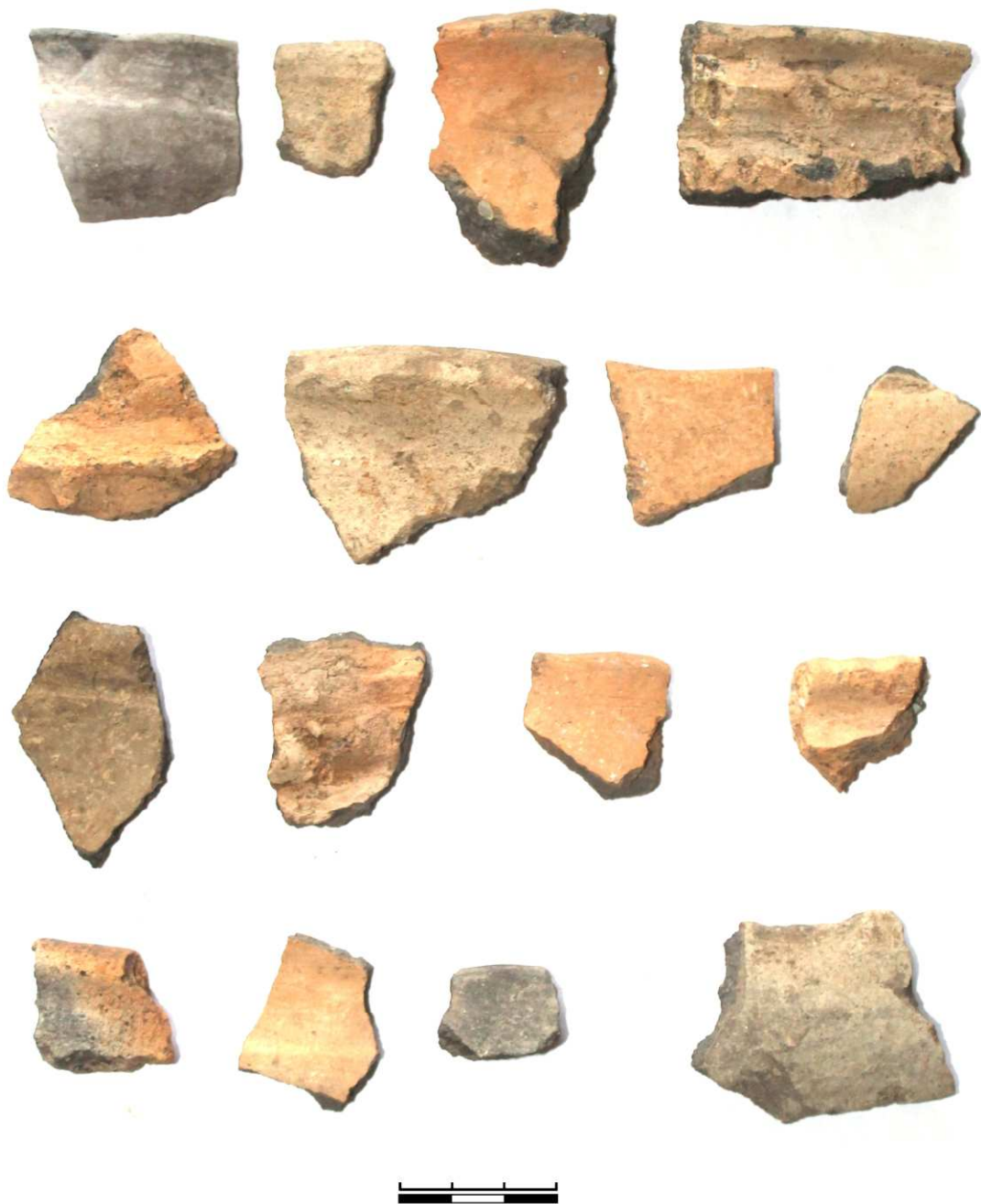


Fig. 2. Andreevca-I. Ceramics. Photo.

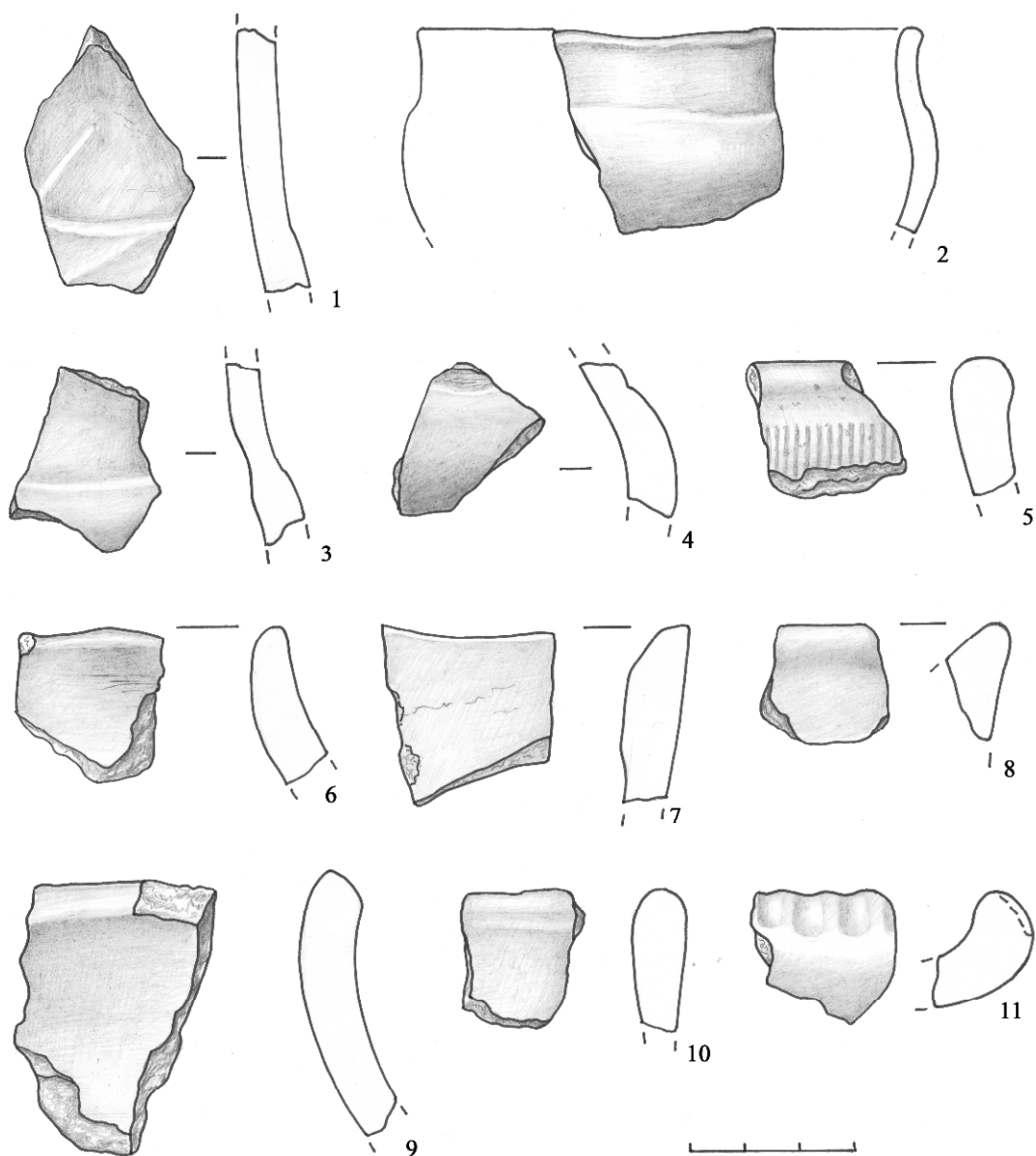


Fig. 3. Andreevca-I. Conventional tableware.

bones of animals, pieces of burnt clay, and different stones, some of them with traces of processing, were found on the plowed surface. The settlement is multilayered. During a surface survey, a small amount of the materials associated with Cucuteni-Trypillia and Cherniakhiv-Syntana-de-Mures cultures were collected. Meanwhile, the ceramics of the Late Bronze Age prevail in the artefactual remains associated with Holercani-Hansca cultural group.

Ceramics: ceramics collected at the settlement of Holercani-Hansca culture near the village of Andreevca could be divided into 2 categories: conventional tableware and conventional cookingware (fig. 2;3;4).

Conventional tableware:

I. **Beakers.** 1. A fragment of a thin-walled polished beaker with a rounded body and a cylindrical neck with a slightly outturned and distinguished rim (fig. 3, 1; 3, 2). The surface is well polished; the polishing is horizontal. Outer and inner surfaces are grey. At the fracture site, the fabric is grey, well-elutriated, and homogeneous.

2. A fragment of a beaker with a rounded body, gradually widening towards the body and a cylindrical neck; the rim is not preserved (fig. 3, 3). The transition from the body to the neck is marked with a deepened polished groove. The outer surface is grey-brown and well-polished. The inner surface is grey and smoothed.

3. Fragment of a beaker with a rounded body and a cylindrical neck (fig. 3, 1). The transition from the body to the neck is made in the form of a small ledge marked with a polished groove. The outer surface is grey-yellow and thoroughly polished. The inner surface is grey-yellow, smoothed. At the fracture site, the fabric is black with impurities of finely ground chamotte.

4. A fragment of a beaker with a body (reconstructed) as spherical, the neck, possibly vertical, is separated from the body with an impressed ledge (fig. 3, 4).

II. **Bowls.** 1. There is a fragment of a bowl with an incurving mouth (fig. 3, 11). The edge of the mouth is decorated with three (?) rows of vertical flutings. The surface is polished, of grey-yellow color. At the fracture site, the fabric is grey-yellow with impurities of ground grit and chamotte.

2. A fragment of a bowl (the edge of the mouth) is pointed with a flat, horizontally smoothed rim, evenly cut (fig. 3, 8). The surface is dark grey and slightly polished.

3. Fragment of a bowl with concave walls (fig. 3, 9). The mouth is obliquely cut inwards. The outer surface is light grey and slightly polished. The inner surface is dark grey, smoothed. There are traces of horizontal smoothing. At the fracture site, the fabric is black with impurities of finely ground chamotte.

III. **Cups.** 1. A fragment of a jar-shaped cup with straight vertical walls and an obliquely cut and polished edge of the mouth (fig. 3, 5). The outer surface is grey-yellow, carefully polished, the inner surface is also grey-yellow, has the traces of horizontal polishing.

2. A fragment of a cup rim (small beaker?) with a short, straight neck; the edge of the mouth is smoothed and rounded (fig. 3, 10). The outer surface is well polished and yellow-brown. The inner surface is grey-yellow and smoothed. At the fracture site, the fabric is grey-yellow with impurities of chamotte.

Conventional cookingware:

Conventional cookingware from Andreevca settlement is represented by pots of 5 types:

1. Pots ornamented with a roller. A fragment of a pot stands out having straight walls, slightly widening towards the body, ornamented along the neck with 2 rollers, one of which is dissected with deepened notches, where straight and oblique notches alternate (fig. 4, 1). The distance between the notches varies within 1.5-2 cm on the upper roller; the roller has a pointed edge. The lower roller is also dissected, but only with vertical notches. The roller-shaped rim is outturned and smoothed. The surface is grey-brown and smoothed. The inner surface is grey, slightly smoothed, and rough. At the fracture site, the fabric is black with impurities of coarsely ground chamotte.

2. Pots with straight walls, ornamented with 2 rollers, dissected and solid. At the same time, a solid roller is much thinner than a dissected one (fig. 4, 2). The upper

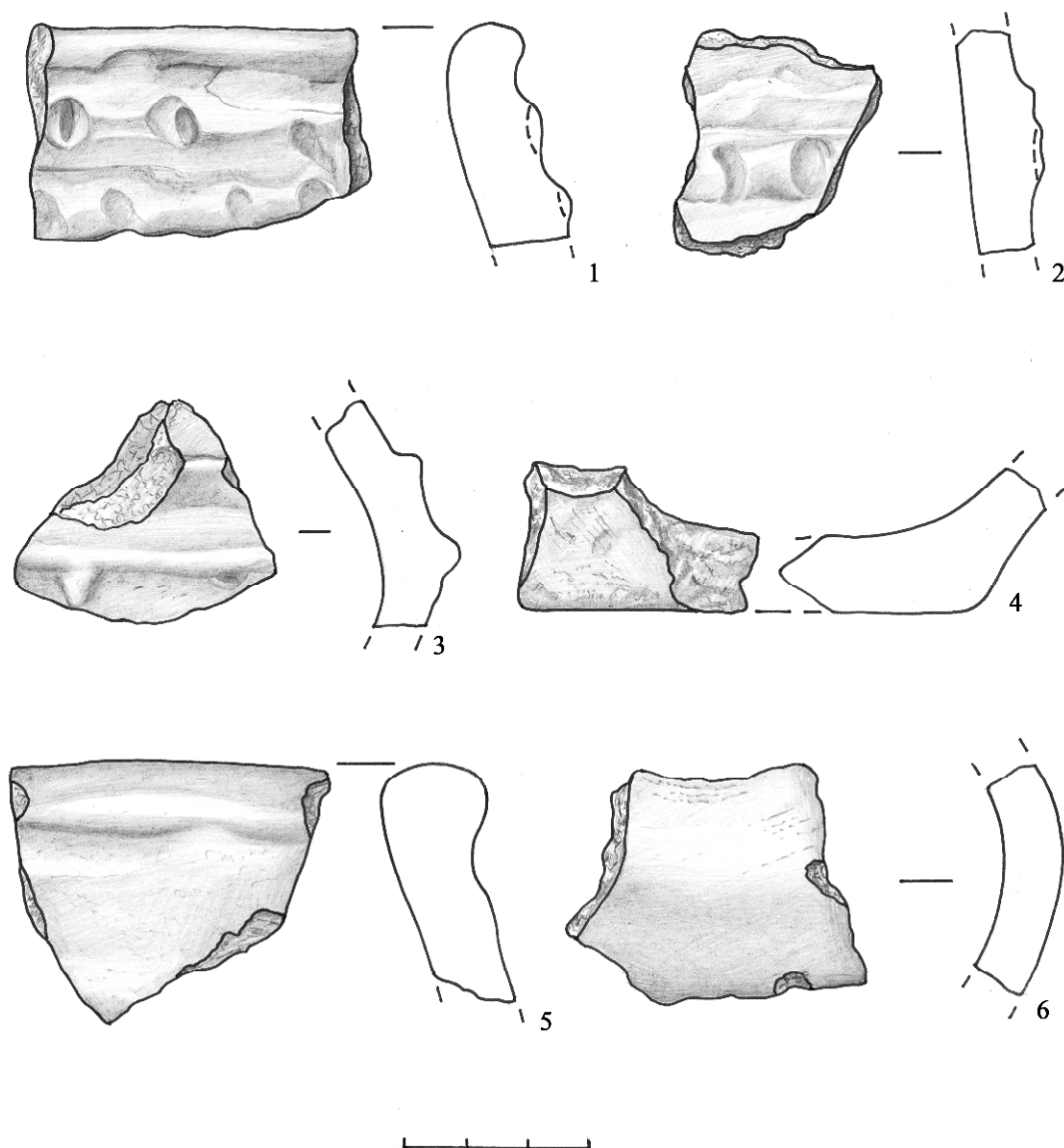


Fig. 4. Andreevca-I. Conventional cookingware.

roller has a pointed edge. The outer surface is slightly smoothed, and grey-yellow, while the inner surface is grey, with traces of horizontal scratches with a bunch of grass. At the fracture site, the fabric is black with impurities of coarsely ground chamotte.

3. Pots with rounded, widening towards the middle of the body, ornamented with two rollers, thinned and acute-angled in cross-section (fig. 4, 3). The outer surface is grey-yellow and slightly smoothed. The inner surface is dark grey; there are horizontal scratches made with a bunch of grass. At the fracture site, the fabric is two-layered; closer to the outer surface it is engobed, grey-yellow, then black with impurities of finely ground chamotte and grit.

4. Pots with a distinct neck, gradually turning into a rounded body (fig. 4, 6). The surface is light-orange and well-polished. The inner surface is grey and smoothed. At the fracture site, the fabric is black with impurities of finely ground chamotte.

5. Unornamented pots of small proportions with a short cylindrical neck (fig. 4, 4). In some cases, on the neck, there are traces of vertical scratching made with a bunch of grass. The outer surface is polished, yellow-brown or grey-brown. At the fracture site, the fabric is yellow-brown and homogeneous without visible impurities.

6. Jar-shaped vessels with a roller-shaped distinct rim and straight walls (fig. 4, 5). Inner and outer surfaces are grey. At the fracture site, the fabric is dark grey with impurities of finely ground chamotte.

Ceramics of Holercani-Hansca group are traditionally divided into tableware and cookingware. Cookingware is represented by pots with a barely outlined or well-distinct neck, having applied dissected rollers, solid horizontal grooves, rows of finger impressions, and pots with a barely marked neck, having applied dissected and smooth rollers, as well as rows of nail impressions. There are straight-walled jar-shaped vessels having a smooth dissected roller in the upper part, finger impressions, non-through punctures, and also large pithos-shaped vessels and the ones looked like large pots.

Tableware is represented by a wide variety of shapes and types of ornamentation. There is a large number of ladles with a distinguished low neck, a body of reduced proportions, sometimes with a protruding rib, and a vertical loop-like handle separated from the edge of the rim. The ladles are ornamented with one or three incised horizontal grooves, below which there are vertical or oblique incised grooves in combination with protrusions-volutes. A large series includes bowls with incurving rim, decorated with oblique flutings along the edge, while horizontal flutings are less common⁸.

CONCLUSIONS

Ceramic material collected near the village of Andreevca fully corresponds to the main types of ware peculiar to Holercani-Hansca cultural formation.

According to O.G. Levitskiy, Holercani-Hansca group fills the gap between the cultural formations of Pre-Babadag and Tămăoani type and Balta group of sites of the Late Bronze Age. In addition, Hallstatt horizon with prevailing incised ceramics, which can be conventionally called Tămăoani-Holercani-Balta, is distinguished⁹. Chronological framework of this horizon according to analogues with Balta group and Tămăoani can be the end of the 12th – 10th century BCE. The closest analogues to this cultural formation could be the cultures of the Lower Danube region – Sihleanu, Tămăoani, Pre-Babadag, Babadag-I¹⁰, and early Belozërka culture sites, including Balta group of the Late Bronze Age. The role of Chisinau-Corlateni type sites, of which Holercani-Hansca group had got a number of material borrowings while forming its cultural entity, is doubtless.

⁸ *Левицкий О.Г.* Погребение раннего железного века у с. Ханска // Археологические Исследования в Молдавии 1981 г. Кишинев, 1985. С. 127.

⁹ *Levițki O.* Grupul Hansca-Holercani... P. 232.

¹⁰ *Morintz S.* Contribuții arheologice la istorie traciilor timpurii. 1. Epoca bronzului în spațiul Carpatobalcanic. București: ARSR, 1978. P. 120, 131.

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