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Dedicated to the commemoration
of the 110th birthday of the
Academician A.P. Okladnikov

A Study of Finds from Excavation I at Suchu Island, the Lower Amur (the 1974 Field Season)

Finds excavated at the Suchu settlement in 1974 include lithics, ceramics, and portable art and ritual objects, now owned by the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography in Novosibirsk. Most of them have not been described before. In this study, they are analyzed using methods of stratigraphy, planigraphy (assessment of position within and between dwellings), petrography and typology (lithics), binocular microscopy (ceramics), and chronology (ceramics, objects of art and ritual). The results suggest that finds from excavation I (1974) represent mostly the Middle Neolithic (the Malyshevo and Kondon cultures and the Belkachi complex), Late Neolithic (the Voznesenovskoye culture), and Final Neolithic. Certain artifacts date to later periods (the Bronze and Early Iron Ages and the Middle Ages). Some of the ceramics are unrelated to the Lower Amur complexes. A reconstruction of the dwellings is attempted. The typological analysis of lithics revealed a variety of tool and spall types. Various minerals were employed, the principal ones being siltstone, argillite, and siliceous rocks. Most of the ceramics, portable art, and ritual objects represent the Middle Neolithic Malyshevo and the Late Neolithic Voznesenovskoye cultures.

Keywords: *Amur River, Suchu settlement, Neolithic, dwellings, stone implements, ceramics, art.*

Introduction

Excavations* conducted on the southeastern part of the Amur Island of Suchu in August–September, 1974, were a continuation of the research of the previous years (1972 and 1973) (Okladnikov, Medvedev, Filatova, 2015; Medvedev, Filatova, 2016). The excavation pit of 1974 was located mainly on the bed of an unpaved road. As in the previous years, the excavation site was divided into squares of 1 × 1 m. The count of their numerical designations remained the same—from south to north (from 20 to 38), while the letter designations of the added squares from east to west (from А to Ж) were supplemented by strokes (from И′ to Б′). The total excavation area in 1974 was 211 m^2 (Fig. 1, *A–C*). During the works, various finds, amounting to 14,647 objects, were obtained.

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Material and methods

The archaeological collection (lithics, ceramics, objects of art and ritual) and field documentation (drawings, diaries, and reports) kept in the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of SB RAS served as material for this study. Various research methods were employed, including stratigraphy and planigraphy (dwellings and space between them), petrography and morphotypology (lithics), binocular microscopy (ceramics), and cultural chronology (ceramics, objects of art and ritual). Petrographic analysis of 18 samples was conducted in the Laboratory of Physical and Chemical Methods of Research at the Khabarovsk Innovation Analytical Center (KhIAC) of the Institute of Tectonics and Geophysics of the FEB RAS. Four of the samples were examined by optical microscopy using an AXio Imager A2m optical polarization microscope, after producing transparent, thin sections*.

Findings

Stratigraphy. Three baulks were left along the lines 25, 31, and A for clarifying the stratigraphical situation. The information was supplemented by the profiles of the southern (along line 20) and northern (along line 39) walls (Fig. 1, *D*–*G*). Generally, the stratigraphy of excavation I (the section of 1974) did not differ from the stratigraphy of its sections unearthed in the previous years. A layer of mixed soil from 15 to 40 cm thick lay on the top. Dark brown humic soil, sometimes reaching 1.5 m in thickness, was below the top layer; it was the main filling of the dwelling pits and space between the dwellings. That layer included lenses of light yellow and light gray sand and comparatively thick interlayers of gray-yellow loose loam, as well as brown and light brown soil. A dense clay layer 5–12 cm thick, alternating with areas of calcined sand, dark brown or almost black soil with the inclusion of charcoal, carbonaceous spots, or clusters of charcoal, lay below. In some cases, the layer of compacted clay lay directly on the natural soil, which was yellow loam.

Dwellings and space between them. Dwelling D almost entirely occupied the southern half of the excavation pit. The dwelling pit was of rounded shape in plan view. Its external diameter was 10.2 m along the N–S line and 12.8 m along the E–W line; the area within the external boundaries was 130.56 m^2. The pit was dug into the ground to a maximum of 2.2 m from the present-day surface. The greatest height of its walls was observed in the western and northwestern parts, where it reached almost 1.5 m in relation to the floor level in the center of the dwelling in its deepest part. In other places, the walls were slightly lower and less steep. The main area of the dwelling pit (from the flat area of the floor to its outer boundaries) was occupied by wide ledges. They could be particularly clearly seen in the southwestern and western parts, reaching a width of 2–3 m. The horizontal platform on which the hearths were located (the floor of the dwelling) was relatively small, measuring 6.5 × 5.5 m. In many places, the floor was specially covered with a layer of clay, the thickness of which reached 40 cm in some places. Three hearths, 80 pole holes, and two pits for household purposes were found in the dwelling. Hearth 1 (1.00 × 1.05 m) was located on the southwestern ledge of the dwelling pit; hearths 2 (0.65 × 0.95 m) and 3 (1.00 × 0.95 m) were placed directly on the floor.

The southwestern corner of dwelling *E* was unearthed in the northern part of the excavation pit. The dwelling pit was of rounded shape in plan view. Taking into account the data obtained during the excavation of 1973, its external diameter was 9 m along the N–S line, and 8 m along the E–W line; the area within the external boundaries was 72 m^2. The dwelling pit was shallow with sloping walls; the floor visibly rose from the center towards the walls. Ledges were not found. A hearth (60 cm in diameter) and seven pole holes were discovered in the part of the dwelling excavated in 1974.

The edge of dwelling *F* was found in the southeastern corner of the excavation pit. It was not possible to determine the size and depth of the dwelling pit from the small section representing a sloping wall. Pole holes were not found in the dwelling pit; however, a shallow pit, which was probably used for household needs, was discovered.

Dwelling G was adjacent to the northeastern side of dwelling *D*. The excavation unearthed a small section of the dwelling, but a pit 20–30 cm deep was clearly visible. Five pole holes were found inside along the wall.

It is likely that a small section of another dwelling was unearthed in the southwestern corner of the excavation pit; a part of the external boundary of a dwelling pit could be seen.

The total area between the dwellings was about 85 m^2. Three pits supposedly intended for household needs and seven pole holes were found (Fig. 1, *C*) on the ground between dwellings *D*, *E*, and *G*. Four carbonaceous spots not more than 5 cm thick were discovered on the southern side of dwelling *D*. Two spots were located in the immediate vicinity of the pit edge, and two more spots were to the southeast of them (Fig. 1, *B*).

Thus, the entire dwelling *D*, a fairly significant section of the space between the dwellings, and part of the dwellings *E*, *F*, and *G* (their southeastern and northwestern segments respectively) were explored in the course of the excavation works.

*Petrographic analysis was conducted by N.V. Berdnikov (Head of the KhIAC).

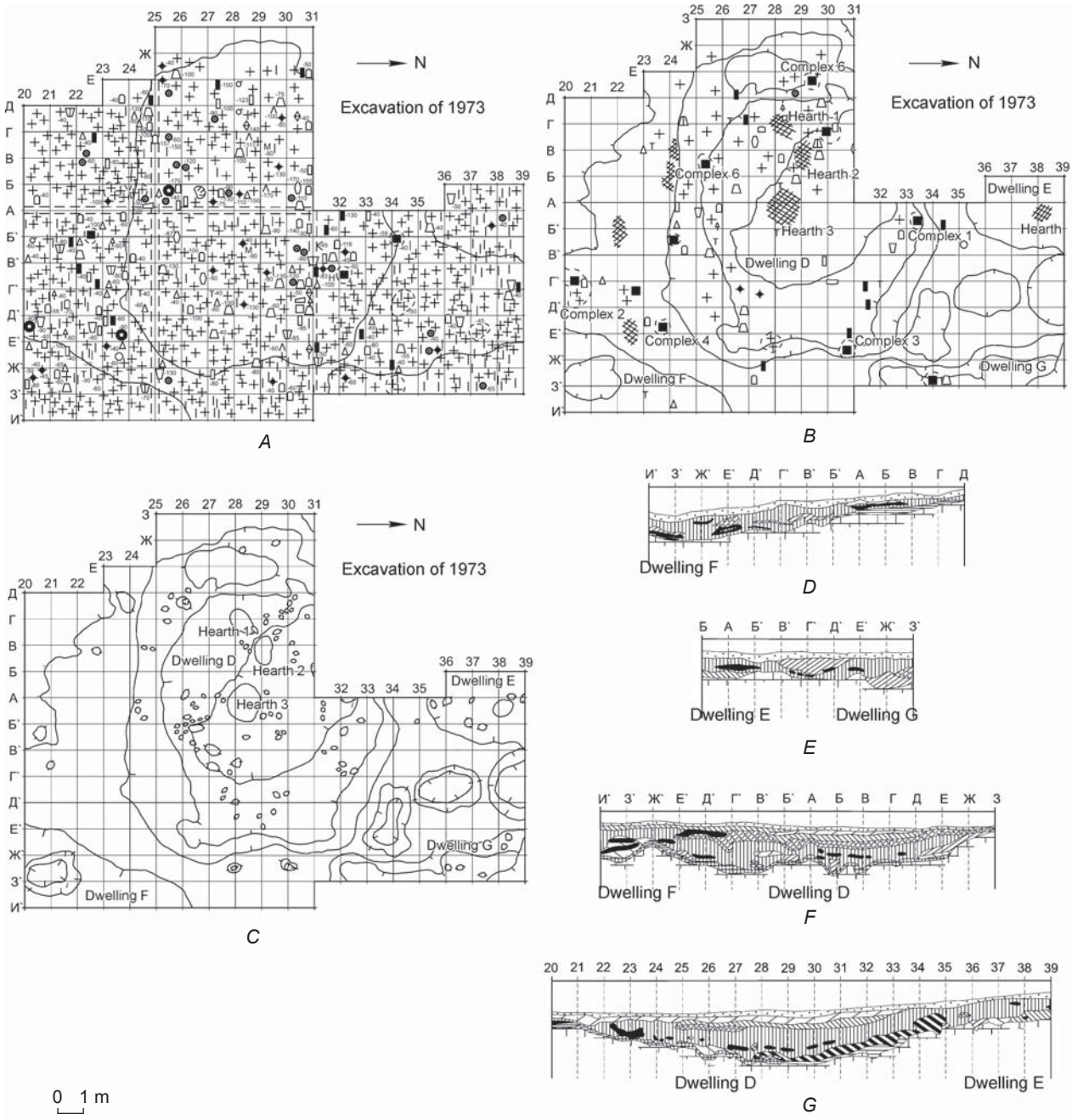

Fig. 1. Plans of a part of excavation I (1974) at the level of the filling of dwellings (*A*), floor (*B*), natural soil (*C*); cross-sections of excavation walls along lines 20 (*D*), 39 (*E*), and of baulks along lines 25 (*F*) and A (*G*).

1 – chopping tool; *2* – knife; *3* – knife-like blade; *4* – tip; *5* – piercer; *6* – scraper-like tool; *7* – combination tool; *8* – saw; *9* – grind stone; *10* – burnisher; *11* – anvil; *12* – hoe; *13* – pestle; *14* – mace; *15* – stone with a cavity; *16* – tool blank; *17* – core; *18* – hammering or pressure tool; *19* – flake; *20* – stone artifact; *21* – pendant; *22* – spindle whorl; *23* – clay sculpture; *24* – collapsed vessel; *25* – pottery; *26* – stone; *27* – depth from the present-day surface; *28* – mixed soil; *29* – gray-yellow loam; *30* – dark brown soil; *31* – dark brown and almost black soil with charcoal; *32* – brown soil; *33* – brown soil with organic remains; *34* – light gray sand; *35* – light yellow sand; *36* – compacted clay (floor); *37* – light brown soil; *38* – calcined sand; *39* – accumulation of charcoal, carbonaceous interlayers; *40* – natural soil; *41* – pole pits; *42* – household pits.

Table 1. **Results of petrographic analysis of the artifacts**

Sample number	Field code	Place of discovery, depth, cm	Rock	Note
C-1	Cy-74/228	Space between dwellings, 20	Quartzite	With muscovite
C-8	Cy-74/4723	Dwelling *F*, filling, lower part, 60-80	Flint	Silicified siltstone
C-12	Cy-74/5662	Same, upper part, 40-60	Quartzite	–
C-13	Cy-74/5685	Same	Chalcedony	Jasperoid
C-14	Cy-74/5686	"	"	Carnelian
C-22	Cy-74/7162	Space between dwellings, 80	Siltstone	–
C-30	Cy-74/8705	Dwelling *F*, filling, upper part, 40-60	Strongly silicified granite	–
C-31	Cy-74/8708	Same	Jasper	–
C-32	Cy-74/8862	Same, lower part, 70	Flint	–
C-33	Cy-74/8863	Same	"	–
C-36	Cy-74/9445	Dwelling *G*, filling, upper part, 50-60	Argillite	–
C-38	Cy-74/10289	Space between dwellings, 60-80	Flint	–
C-41	Cy-74/10924	Dwelling *F*, filling, lower part, 100	Siltstone	–
C-42	Cy-74/10925	Same	Jasper	Interlayers of sugar-like crystalline quartz
C-43	Cy-74/10930	"	Chalcedony	Opaline
C-44	Cy-74/10933	"	"	"
C-52	Cy-74/12836	"	Siltstone	–
C-56	Cy-74/13819	Space between dwellings, 60-80	Olivine gabbro-basalt	–

Lithics. The collection from excavation I of 1974 amounts to 353 specimens*. Various types of stone were used (Table 1; Fig. 2, *1–4*). Siltstone and argillite prevail. Flint, quartzite, jasper, chalcedony, and so on were also typical types of stone, mainly appearing in the form of small- and medium-sized pebbles. Basalt, gabbro-basalt, granite, and sandstone were also present.

The materials of primary reduction amounted to 269 specimens (Fig. 2, *5–11*). Six wedge-shaped cores with a single platform made on pebbles from 3.00 to 5.75 cm long were found. There were also core-like fragments (8 spec.) and chipped pebbles (3 spec.). The laminar assemblage included knife-like blades (15 intact and four fragments), flakes (26 spec.), and spalls (22 spec.). Blades were bi- or trihedral, almost regular in shape; laminar flakes and spalls were mostly irregular in shape. Notches, traces of use, and retouching were present. Flakes (204 spec.) were mostly of medium size. Spalls (281 spec.) were technical, with areas of natural surface, but mainly secondary and frontal.

The tool kit (Fig. 2, *12–24*) consisted of tools (66 spec.), their fragments (31 spec.), and blanks (15 spec.), and included arrowheads and dart tips, knives, piercers, end-scrapers and a side-scraper, a tool similar to an adze or side-scraper, axes, adzes, a chisel, combination tools, and two fragments of mace heads or fishing sinkers. Auxiliary tools were represented by grinding stones (intact and fragments), a burnisher, two fragments of hammering tools, a pressure tool, and plate-anvil with broken ends.

Arrowheads (13 intact and a fragment) had an elongated-triangular shape; straight, rounded or grooved base, or extending tang. Dart tips (two intact and five fragments) were lancet- or leaf-shaped with a straight base or slightly protruding tang. Knives (nine intact, two fragments, and a blank) were leaf-shaped, slightly asymmetrical in plan, lenticular in cross-section, and of elongated-subtriangular shape. End-scrapers (13 intact and 11 blanks) had working surfaces on the end and side surfaces. Piercers (three intact and a blank) were with long or short working parts. Axes (two intact, eight fragments, and a blank) had elongated-subrectangular shape in plan view and subtriangular shape in cross-section. Adzes (9 intact, 13 fragments, and a blank) were elongated-subtrapezoidal or subrectangular in plan, two- or one-sided convex, subtriangular, or rectangular in cross-section.

Flakes were most often used as blanks for tools; plates and pebbles were used less frequently. Retouching was the main method of secondary processing; grinding and polishing were also employed. Retouching was

*Lithics from dwelling *D* (1518 spec.) were excluded from the collection under consideration, since these have been analyzed in a special publication (Medvedev, Filatova, 2017).

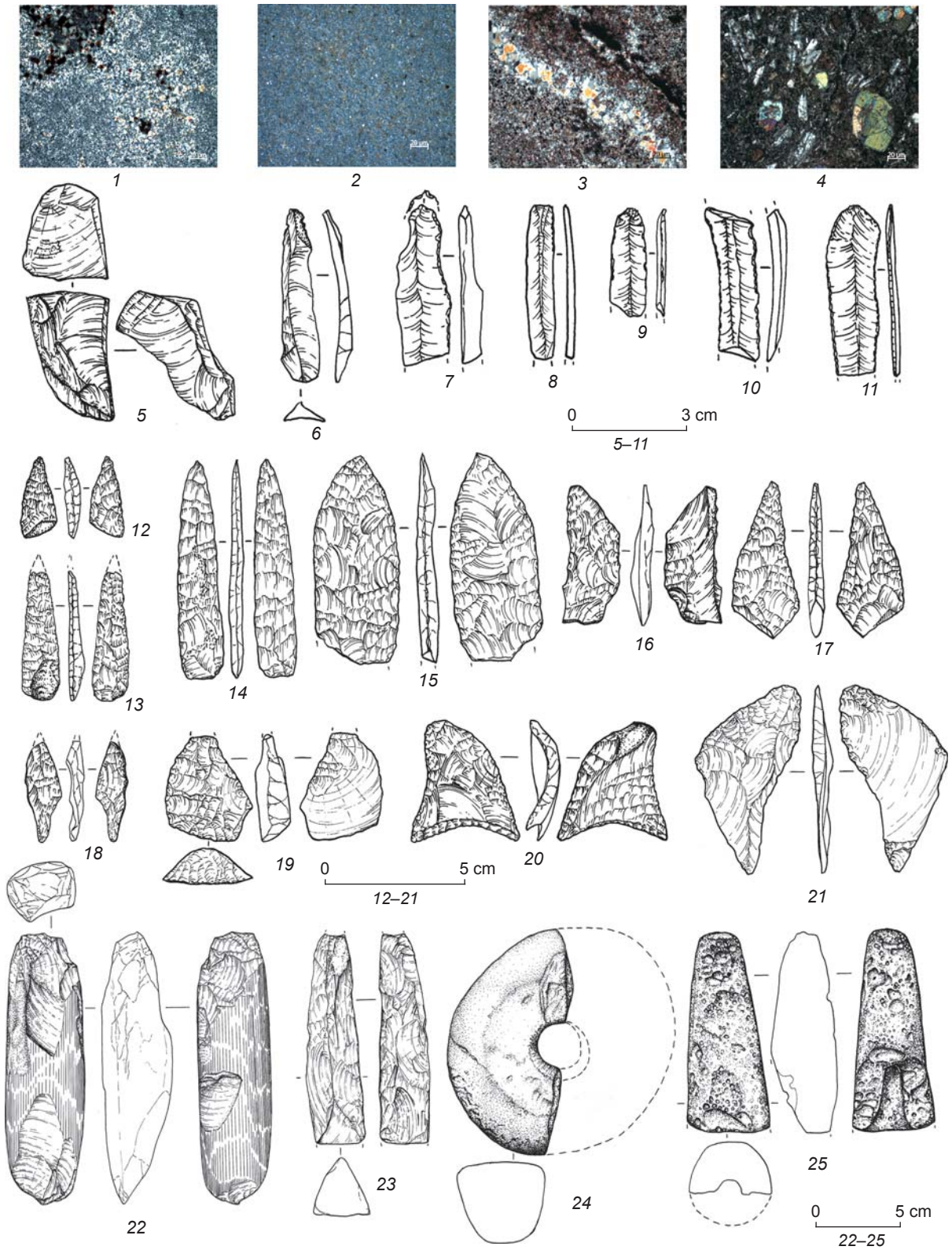

Fig. 2. Photographs of thin sections (*1–4*) and lithic artifacts (*5–25*).
1 – carnelian (C-14); *2* – siltstone (C-41); 3 – jasper with the inclusions of sugar-like crystalline quartz (C-42); *4* – olivine gabbro-basalt (C-56); *5* – core; *6 –11* – knife-like blades; *12*, *13* – arrowheads; *14*, *15* – dart tips; *16*, *17*, *21* – knives; *18* – piercer; *19* – end-scraper; 20 – combination tool; *22* – adze; *23* – axe; *24* – fragment of a mace head; *25* – "man–woman" sculptural representation.

Table 2. **Distribution of clay vessels and their parts according to their location in the excavation**

Pottery	Dwellings				Space between dwellings	In total
	D	*E*	*F*	*G*		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
General data						
Vessel (reconstruction)	17	–	3	–	5	25
Upper part	219	–	13	11	89	332
Lower part	15	–	4	–	9	28
Side part	4	–	1	3	2	10
Rim	1194	20	165	53	295	1727
Wall	6115	148	908	250	1671	9092
Bottom	727	2	97	35	197	1058
In total	8291	170	1191	352	2268	12,272
Malyshevo culture						
Vessel (reconstruction)	4	–	2	–	3	9
Upper part	106	–	9	7	60	182
Lower part	7	–	3	–	7	17
Side part	3	–	–	2	–	5
Rim	872	6	130	35	245	1288
Wall	4104	99	713	187	1250	6353
Bottom	402	6	66	20	136	630
In total	5498	111	923	251	1701	8484
Kondon culture						
Vessel (reconstruction)	2	–	1	–	0	3
Upper part	13	–	1	2	12	28
Lower part	1	–	1	–	–	2
Side part	0	–	1	–	1	2
Rim	63	2	14	2	23	104
Wall	372	28	100	20	191	711
Bottom	93	9	20	7	38	167
In total	544	39	138	31	265	1017
Belkachi complex						
Upper part	4	–	–	1	2	7
Side part	–	–	–	–	1	1
Rim	10	3	8	2	–	23
Wall	155	5	35	7	52	254
Bottom	1	–	–	–	–	1
In total	170	8	43	10	55	286
Voznesenovskoye culture						
Vessel (reconstruction)	9	–	–	–	2	11
Upper part	62	–	1	1	12	76
Lower part	4	–	–	–	2	6
Side part	1	–	–	1	–	2
Rim	180	9	8	13	22	232

Table 2 (end)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Wall	840	15	37	32	145	1069
Bottom	113	5	8	8	17	151
In total	1209	29	54	55	200	1547
Final Neolithic type						
Vessel (reconstruction)	2	–	–	–	–	2
Upper part	25	–	2	–	–	27
Lower part	1	–	–	–	–	1
Rim	22	–	–	–	2	24
Wall	240	–	1	1	9	251
Bottom	69	–	1	–	4	74
In total	359	–	4	1	15	379

Table 3. **Distribution of household ceramics according to their location in the excavation**

Ceramics	Dwellings				Space between dwellings	In total
	D	*E*	*F*	*G*		
General data						
Spindle whorl	1/6	-	0/1	0/1	0/2	1/10
Spindle whorl blank	7/4	2/0	-	-	1/0	10/4
Burnisher	1/2	-	-	-	-	1/2
Burnisher blank	5/0	-	-	-	-	5/0
Side-scraper	1/0	-	-	-	-	1/0
Spool	0/1	-	-	-	-	0/1
In total	15/13	2/0	0/1	0/1	1/2	18/17
Malyshevo culture						
Spindle whorl	1/4		0/1	0/1	0/2	1/8
Spindle whorl blank	5/4	2/0	-	-	1/0	8/4
Burnisher	1/2	-	-	-	-	1/2
Burnisher blank	5/0	-	-	-	-	5/0
Side-scraper	1/0	-	-	-	-	1/0
In total	13/10	2/0	0/1	0/1	1/2	16/14

Note. The first figure indicates the number of complete specimens; the second figure indicates the number of fragments of the items.

steep or semicircular, subparallel, parallel and striated, flattening (from the back) and sharpening (on the edges). Chopping tools were formed by grinding the surfaces and sharpening the blade part.

Morphotypological and functional analysis of the lithics has shown the presence of artifacts associated with primary reduction, as well as various tools and implements in the settlement complex.

Household ceramics. The collection includes 12,307 specimens: clay vessels (reconstructions), their parts (12,272), and other objects made of clay (35). Ceramics of the Middle (the Malyshevo and Kondon cultures, the Belkachi complex), Late (the Voznesenovskoye culture), and Final (Final Neolithic type) Neolithic have been identified (Tables 2, 3; Fig. 3, *1–3*, *6–23*, *25–28*, *31–35*, *39–44*). The Middle Neolithic ceramics are typically represented by open and closed vessels with or without an articulated neck, which were hand-built using the coil-ring and coil-spiral technique, and also possibly the patch technique, as well as the base or base-and-body shaping method. The clay was dense, with the addition of grog. The color ranges from light (yellow, reddish, orange, or

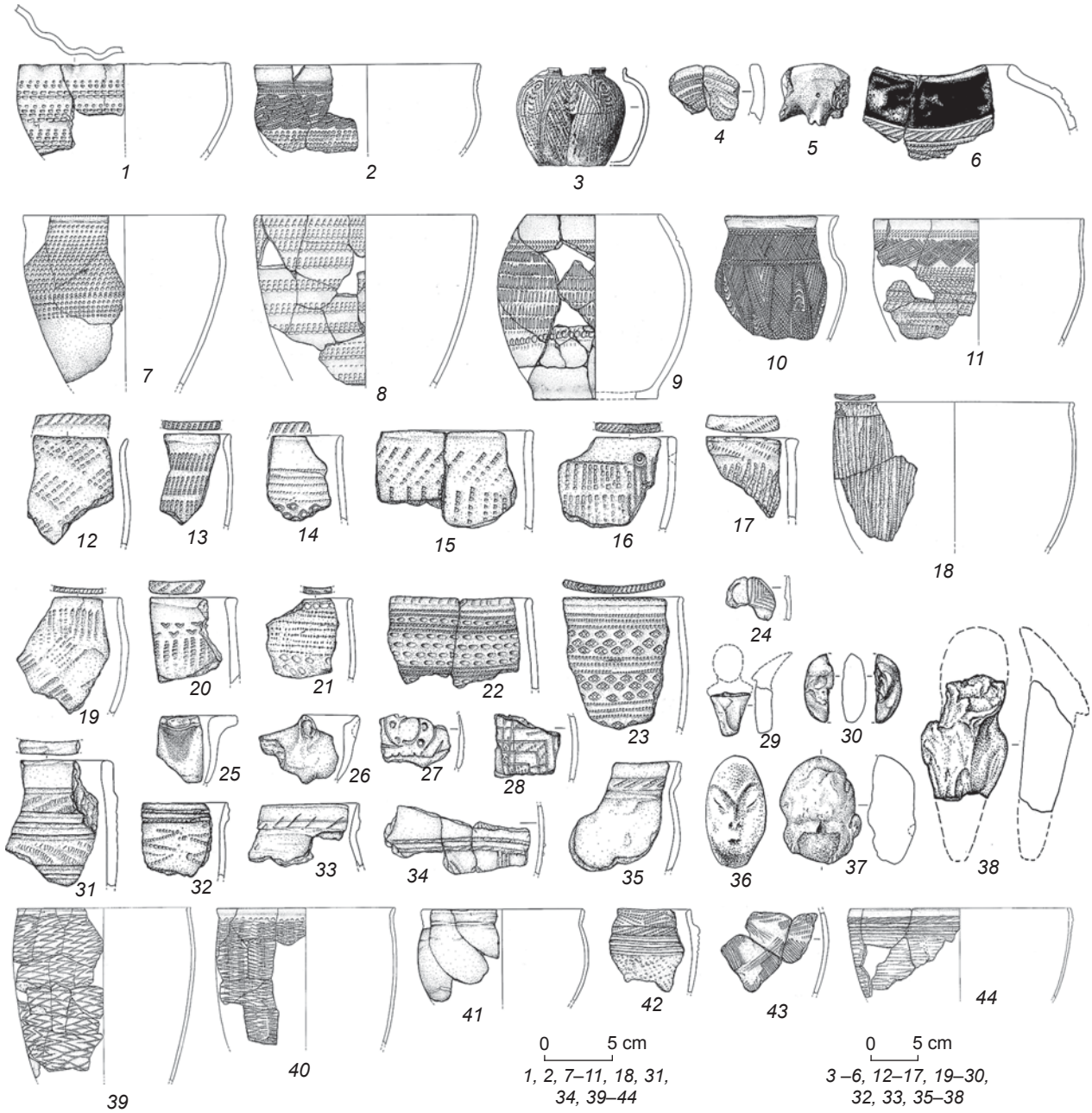

Fig. 3. Household ceramics (*1–3*, *6–23*, *25–28*, *31–35*, *39–44*), and objects of art and ritual (*4*, *5*, *24*, *29*, *30*, *36–38*). *1–11*, *29*, *30*, *36–38* – Malyshevo culture; *24–28*, *31–35*, *39*, *40* – Voznesenovskoye culture; *12–16*, *19–23* – Kondon culture; *17*, *18* – Belkachi complex; *41* – Final Neolithic type; *42–44* – ceramics with features of various cultural traditions.

brown) to dark (brown and gray) shades; "Malyshevo" samples painted with red paint (294 spec.) are present. The ornamental decoration on the Malyshevo pottery is distinguished by great variety, while the Kondon and Belkachi pottery typically display "standardized" elements, motifs, and compositions. The Late and Final Neolithic pottery typically had necks of the closed type; the vessels were manufactured using the coil-ring technique and the base, base-and-body, or body-and-base shaping method. The clay ranged from relatively dense to very friable, with the addition of freshwater clam shells. The color is yellowish- or orange-gray, light and dark brown, or dark gray. The decoration of the Voznesenovskoye pottery is quite diverse, whereas only the rims were decorated on the Final Neolithic pottery.

In addition to the above complexes, the collection includes four rims and two walls which combine the "Malyshevo" and "Voznesenovskoye" features, as well as ceramics (116 spec.) that cannot be identified as Lower Amur pottery (Vasilevsky, 2008: 376, fig. 100, *2*, *3*). Three

groups of fragments made of a distinctive friable clay compound with the admixture of freshwater clam shells stand out from the latter group: 1) with the impressions of rope of various thickness and texture; 2) with small oval impressions resembling punch marks, and 3) with traced marks of a combed tool, possibly a shell.

In addition to Neolithic ceramics, the collection includes pottery of later periods (450 spec.), such as six rims and three walls of the Metal Ages (Medvedev, 2003; Deryugin, Losan, 2009: 53, 64, pl. 8, *1*, *3*, *7*), eight upper and two lower parts, 37 rims, 322 walls, 49 bottoms, and a spindle whorl blank of the Early Iron Age, as well as three rims, 18 walls, and a bottom from the Middle Ages.

Thus, most of the ceramics discovered during the excavations in 1974, belong to the Middle Neolithic. The greatest part of these materials is associated with dwelling complexes, which makes it possible to establish their cultural and chronological attribution. The presence of other Neolithic and post-Neolithic ceramics testifies to constant migration flows, which passed over the island from the Middle Neolithic until the Advanced Middle Ages. Part of the migrants were from other regions than the population of the area under research and had different exit points. The analysis of the ceramics has shown the presence of developed pottery traditions with distinctive features at the level of types, complexes, and cultures, as well as features of similarity at a regional and chronological level.

Objects of art and ritual. The collection consists of 57 samples (Table 4, see Fig. 2, *25*; 3, *4*, *5*, *24*, *29*, *30*, *36–38*). The Malyshevo culture includes four stone and two ceramic pendants, a disk made from the bottom of a vessel, part of a stone disc, and a fragment of a ceramic artifact. Three fragments of clay objects similar to the churinga type, and fragments of five sculptural images are associated with the same complex. Four of the sculptures are ceramic bear figurines (one intact and three fragmented), one is a stone phallic object with the female symbol-vulva (the height of the artifact is 11 cm; the diameter of the base is 5 cm). A fragment of a flat clay ring, ten intact and five broken ceramic rods, two fragments of clay stamps, and part of the churinga can be attributed to the Voznesenovskoye culture. The fragments of ceramic sculptures: six female (two heads and four fragments of the torso), two male (fragments of heads), and two unidentified (parts of legs?) might have belonged both to the Malyshevo and Voznesenovskoye tradition (Medvedev, 2011: 11–13). Cultural and chronological attribution of two more finds (undecorated fragments of disks with holes) is the Final Neolithic type and the Poltse culture.

The above objects of art and ritual (discs, churinga, rods, rings, and small statuary of clay and stone) have been often found among the materials of the Malyshevo and Voznesenovskoye settlements (Derevianko et al., 2000: 428–429; 2002: 194, 246, 366, 368; Derevianko,

Table 4. **Distribution of the objects of art and ritual according to their location in the excavation***

Type of the object	Dwellings				Space between dwellings	In total
	D	*E*	*F*	*G*		
Ceramic disk	1/2	–	–	–	–	1/2
Stone disk (siltstone)	0/1	–	–	–	–	0/1
Ceramic pendant	2/0	–	–	–	–	2/0
Stone pendant (siltstone, chert)	6/0	–	–	–	–	6/0
Stone pendant blank (siltstone)	1/0	–	–	–	–	1/0
Stone bead	1/0	–	–	–	–	1/0
Ceramic ring	–	–	–	–	0/1	0/1
Stone ring (jade)	–	–	–	–	1/0	1/0
Ceramic sculpture	1/8	–	0/3	–	0/2	1/13
Stone sculpture (basalt)	1/0	–	–	–	–	1/0
Ceramic rod	8/4	–	2/0	–	0/1	10/5
Ceramic stamp	0/2	–	–	–	–	0/2
Ceramic artifact	1/1	–	1/0	1/0	–	3/1
Stone artifact (chert)	1/0	–	–	–	–	1/0
Churinga	0/3	0/1	–	–	–	0/4
In total	23/21	0/1	3/3	1/0	1/4	28/29

*See the notes to Table 3.

Medvedev, 1993: 60, 64, 86; 1994: 34, 41; Medvedev, 2000, 2001, 2002). A significant number of non-utilitarian objects discovered in the excavation indicate developed spiritual traditions, primarily associated with the fertility and solar cults.

Discussion and conclusions

The planigraphic analysis of the excavated sections of dwellings has revealed their structural features. A significant difference in depth has been observed. The depth was over 2 m from the present-day surface near dwelling *D*, while the dwelling pits in dwellings *E*, *F*, and *G* were shallow, and did not have ledges which were found in the pit of dwelling *D*. Another structural feature of the fully excavated dwelling *D* was three hearths. The holes from the poles within that dwelling appeared in four large clusters. The first cluster (12 holes) was located on the upper ledge of the dwelling pit and had an arched shape repeating the outline of the dwelling. The second (29 holes) and third (31 holes) clusters were mainly concentrated on the second ledge and on the floor below it. They were extended in two parallel bands along the NE–SW line. The fourth cluster (11 holes) was located around hearth 1 in the center of the dwelling pit. The identified structural features of dwelling *D* (large size, deep dwelling pit, and presence of ledges) are typical of the Malyshevo structures. Relatively shallow dwelling pits without ledges, like those in dwellings *E*, *F*, and *G*, are typical of the building traditions of primarily the Kondon culture. It is possible that at least one of the partially unearthed dwellings, probably dwelling *F*, is associated with the Kondon culture. If this is the case, the excavations of 1974 revealed the remains of the Kondon culture only in one place on Suchu Island.

It can be assumed that the largest and deepest dwelling (*D*) from the dwellings unearthed in 1974 was built earlier than the rest. It should be attributed to the advanced stage of the building tradition. Dwelling *D*, like many other similar structures of the Malyshevo culture, had an underground part (dwelling pit) with ledge-beds along the walls, attached with posts, stakes, and wood slabs. The wooden and earth structure of the dwelling, which was above the surface, was held on posts. The external appearance of the dwelling can be most likely associated with a truncated pyramid. The entrance to the dwelling has not been identified. The inhabitants must have come in and gone out through the smoke hole on a log-ladder. Such a design was typical for almost all Neolithic dwellings of the Amur region. Dwellings *E*, *F*, and *G* belong to a somewhat later stage. The stratigraphic situation confirms this conclusion. It can be seen in the cross-section of the baulk along line A that the lower layer of filling in dwelling *E* partly covered the floor of dwelling *D*. Most likely, this layer is the discharged soil, which originated during the construction of the later dwelling pit. The cross-section of the baulk along line 25 demonstrates a similar situation with respect to dwellings *F* and *D*.

Lithics and ceramics from excavation I (1974) clearly indicate that the ancient population of the island had a combined economy which was based on hunting, fishing, and gathering. Tools for processing stone, wood, and bone, for hunting and fishing, for processing procured meat and fish as well as gathered products have been found. The analysis of ceramics indicates developed pottery traditions with pronounced individual features on the level of cultures, complexes, and types along with common features on the level of the region. Numerous objects of art and ritual testify to developed spiritual traditions including those associated with the fertility and solar cults. The study of the ceramics revealed the traces of permanent internal and external migration flows, which passed over the island from the middle stages of the Neolithic (late fifth to early fourth millennium BC) until the Advanced Middle Ages. It is possible to note the different exit points of migrants. However, as the study has shown, the Island of Suchu in the Neolithic was the place for long-term residence primarily for the carriers of the Malyshevo and Voznesenovskoye cultures.

Thus, continuous studies of the Suchu settlement, which were conducted in 1974, followed up on the works of previous years. A variety of archaeological materials was obtained during the excavations. The analysis of the artifacts (stone implements, ceramics, and objects of art and ritual) carried out by various research methods has significantly supplemented scholarly knowledge about the Neolithic of the Amur region and the adjacent territories, and outlined the prospects for future research.

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