

The Grotto in Inkerman – new archaeological site in the South-Western Crimea

გროტ ინკერმანში ახლად აღმოჩენილი არქეოლოგიური კერა ყირიმში

Evelina Kravchenko

Institute of Archaeology of NAS of Ukraine, Kyiv, senior research fellow,

PhD (candidat of history science in archaeology)

ეველინა კრავჩენკო

უკრაინის ეროვნული მეცნიერებათა აკადემიის არქეოლოგიის ინსტიტუტი, უმცროსი

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Abstract: In 2012 the Inkerman expedition of the National Academy of Science of Ukraine examined the cave under Kalamita fortress near the ancient road, which was marked in scientific literature as modern. The excavation shows, that this cave is ancient and inhabited all of time of human history preliminary from the Late Paleolithic time. There are several rests of modern building in surface and ancient layers of Stone Age are in the cave. In Stone Age time this cave was a grotto.

Key words: cave, grotto, Crimea, Stone Age

აბსტრაქტი: 2012 წელს უკრაინის მეცნიერებათა ეროვნული აკადემიის ინკერმანის ექსპედიციამ გამოიკვლია გამოქვაბული კალამიტას ციხის ქვეშ უძველესი გზის მახლობლად, რომელიც სამეცნიერო ლიტერატურაში მონიშნული იყო, როგორც თანამედროვე. გათხრები აჩვენებს, რომ ეს გამოქვაბული უძველესია და დასახლებული იყო კაცობრიობის ისტორიის მთელი პერიოდის განმავლობაში, გვიან პალეოლითის დროიდან.

საკვანძო სიტყვები: მღვიმე, ყირიმი, ქვის ხანა

The newly discovered cave is located in the South-Western Crimea in Inkerman under the medieval fortress Kalamita in the upper part of the Monastyr's`ka rock (Fig.1). The Monastyr's`ka rock rises above the right bank of the Chernaya River, directly hanging over the upper reaches of the Sevastopol Bay and gently descending to the mouth of the river. The natural cave is located under the peak on the western side of the plateau, oriented towards the west-southwest. The rock is composed of limestone of the Sarmatian age, which is quite soft and therefore has been mined in this place since the Late Roman period. There are not many descriptions of the medieval time associated with Kalamita. And only one of them provides general information about the district of Calamita. Thus, Evliya Celebi speaks of large caves under the fortress (Knyha puteshestvyi Evlyy Cheleby, 1996: 79).

In Dubois de Montpert, the Monastery rock was sketched in such a way that there was no cave there (D. de Montpereux, Fr, 1839). The text provides only information about the huge quarries under the fortress. Apparently, these data completely misled the researchers of the 20th century, who almost all attributed to the cave a recent artificial origin, since de Montpere traveled around the Crimea long after the cessation of stone mining from the southern and western sides of the Monastery Rock. However, recently we had the opportunity to get acquainted with the descriptions of the Inkerman fortress made by E. Markov (Markov, 1872: 131), in which he also mentions a large cave near the road. Markov's descriptions date back to the time before the founding of St. Clement's Monastery on this site, respectively, it is worth thinking that de Montpere simply did not notice the gap in the cave canopy under the peak of the plateau. At the end of the 19th - beginning of the 20th centuries. on the southern and western sides of the rock, a monastery was established and built. Perhaps at that time the cave was used by monks for economic purposes, during the civil war the cave was credited with a shelter for the Chapaev division, in the 1930s the entire area under the rock was occupied by special factory No. 2 and the territory became a restricted area. This could be the only reason why the cave under Kalamita remained unknown to G.A.Bonch-Osmolovsky, who investigated all such sites in the area. Neither Yu.G.Kolosov, nor V.N.Gladilin, nor V.N.Bibikov have any information about her. A brief description of the cave as a natural grotto is given by N.P.Katsur (Katsur, 1963: 3-12) and V.F.Filippenko (Filipenko, 1997: 6). Thus, all of the above has become for us an exhaustive argument for conducting preliminary studies.

At the edge of the canopy, periodic collapses of the visor can be visually noted. Traces of the collapse are also visible at 15-20 m from the outside from the modern edge of the canopy. Under the East and South walls of the cave there are also powerful natural undisturbed landslides. The modern cave is oval in plan. On the North wall of the grotto, traces of a recent undercut and a niche from beams are visible. The remains of masonry at the entrance to the northwestern part, visible on the surface of the cave bottom, are connected with the same part of the cave. It is possible that these constructions are connected with the monastic premises or the factory No. 2. There are no archaeological finds in the recovered material. The top soil is a finely dispersed humus sandy loam with ash. At the time of the inspection, the cave was dry and well ventilated. The best lighting in the cave is at sunset, in the morning the cave is illuminated by light reflected from neighboring rocks. During the hottest time of the year (July-August), the temperature is moderate in the cave. The length of the cave from the modern edge of the canopy to the back wall is 20 m (Fig.2), the width along the central part is 17 m, the width at the entrance is 18.2 m. The height of the arch to the surface is 2.5 m at the entrance, 1.5 m at the back walls. The remnants of the rock are visible in plan on the opposite side of the road from the cave (Fig.3).

Remains of Late Pleistocene stratifications were noted along the edges of the cave walls. Closer to the entrance, in places where the collapse was removed, they were destroyed, apparently as a result of households of the 20th century. The remains of the Late Pleistocene layers are also visible at the rear eastern and southern walls in the crevices of the collapse. The excavation showed that a light pinkish sediment with crushed stone and no admixture of clay begins in this place of the cave at a depth of 0.25-0.30 m. The square was deepened to 1.6 m. Continuous collapse of the arch began below this mark,

which was not possible to excavate without increasing the area of the square. Credibly that this cave was a grotto in the Stone Age time.

Layer stratigraphy (Kravchenko, 2012):

1. A layer of modern dark ash humus sandy loamy soil with debris continues depth of 0.25 m. The archaeological material is represented by several fragments of medieval amphorae and jugs, the rim of a faience glazed plate, and scattered animal bones.

2. Below, at a depth of up to 0.6 m, there are deposits of loose late Pleistocene sediment of light pink color with interspersed limestone stones, identical in structure and color to its remains near the cave walls. A fragment of flint (prenucleus?) was found 0.15 m from the edge of the pit at a depth of 0.35 m in a layer of sediment. This layer contained no other finds. A several animal bones were also found on the surface of this layer at a depth of 0.25-0.30 m.

3. Below 0.6 m, the sediment is a layered structure with limestone rubble. Crushed stone is porous with sharp protrusions; pits are filled with the same sediment. The soil differs in color - becoming lighter without a pinkish tint. Such soil continues to the entire excavated depth up to 1.6 m, i.e. to the level of collapse. Its filling is a large number of small and medium-sized fragments of bones of wild animals.

Conclusion

The significance of this archaeological sites is even greater, since almost all such sites in the southwestern Crimea were completely explored and excavated in the last century using old methods and with old scientific and technical means. More accurate information about the dating and cultural affiliation of this archaeological site can be obtained in the course of further work.

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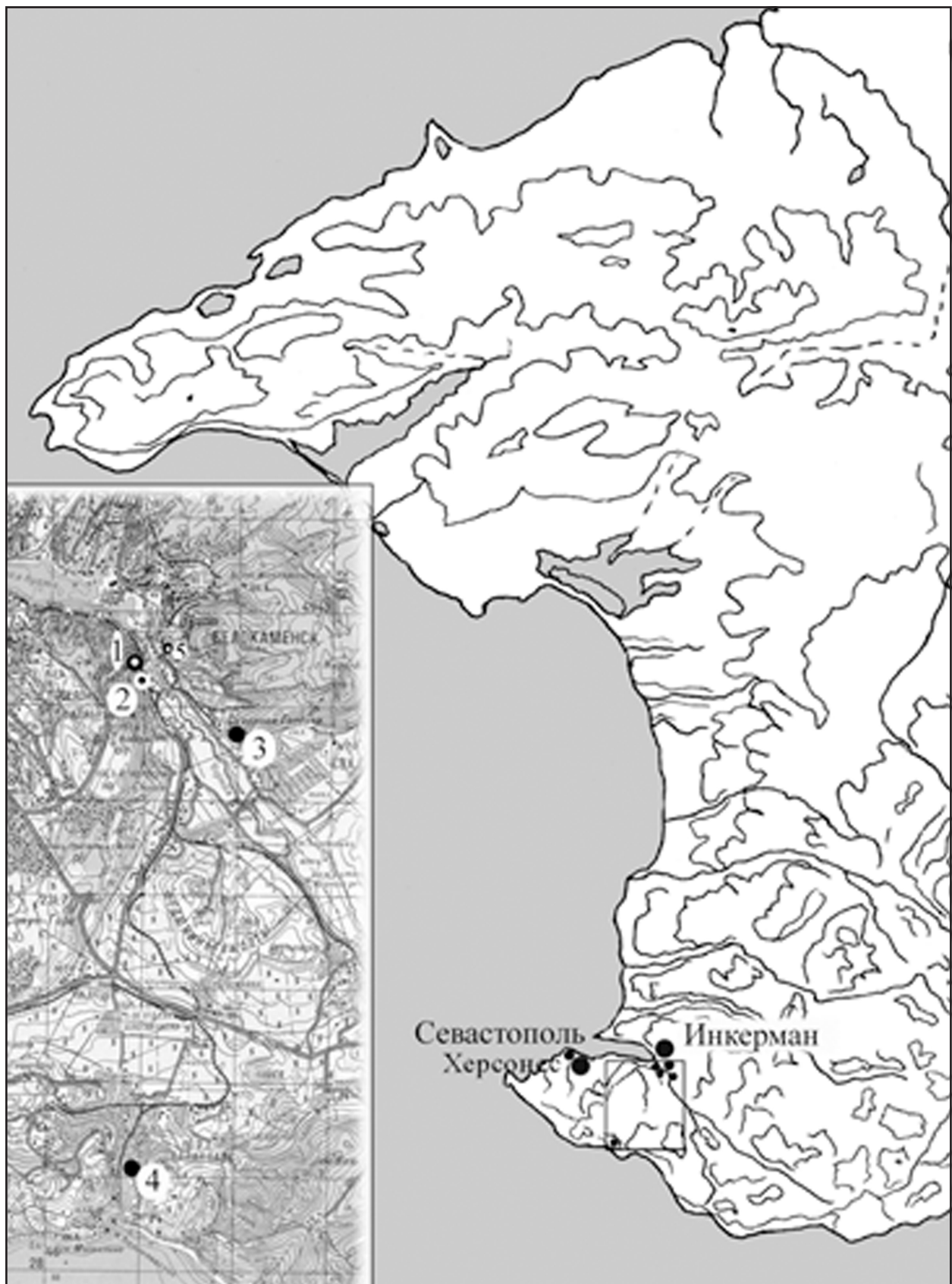


Figure 1. Western Crimea and sites on the region of survey: 1,2 – Uch Bash,
 3 – Sakharnaya Golovka, 4 – Balaklavske, 5 – Kalamita

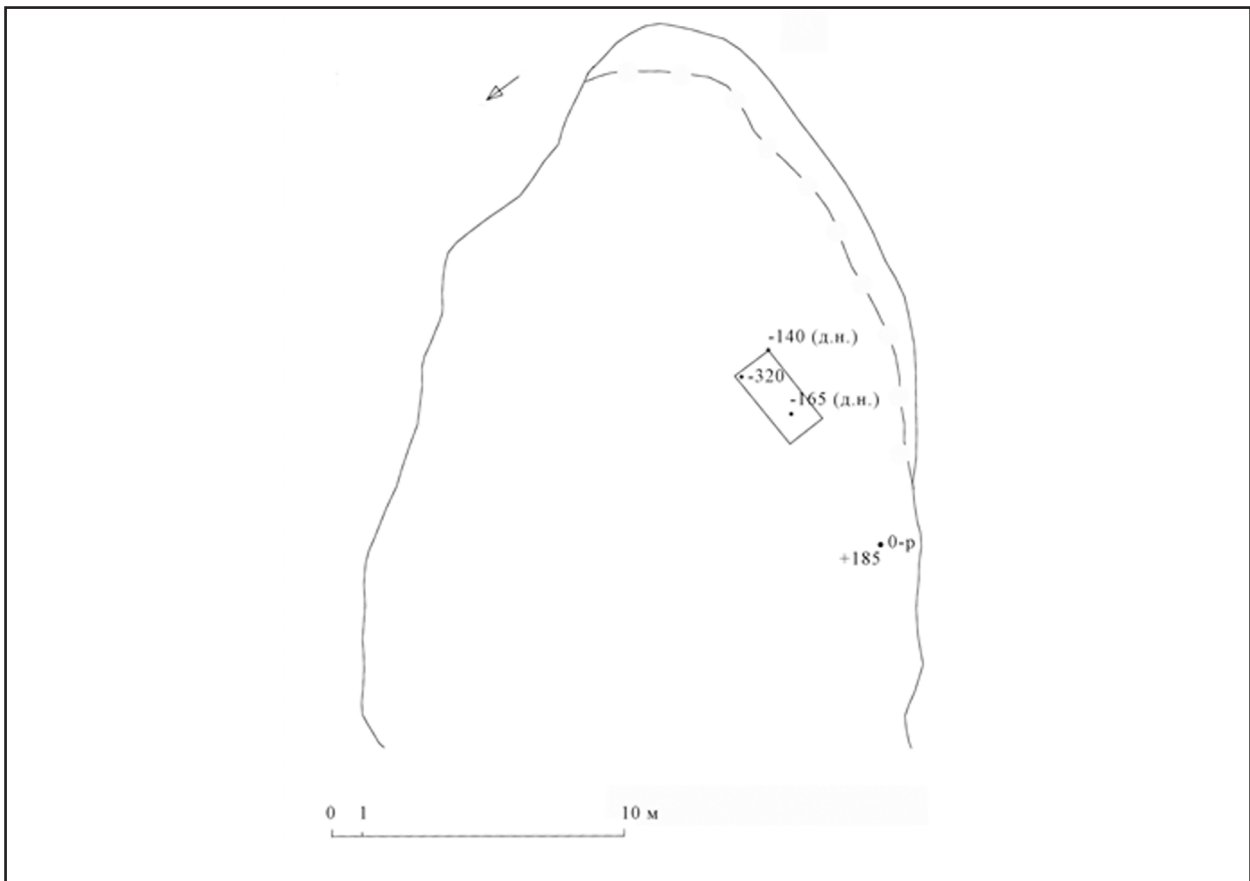


Figure 2. Plan of cave with excavation square (2012).



Figure 3. The canopy of cave in Inkerman (Photo by Evelina Kravchenko, 2012).