

# Archaeology, Language, And History: Essays On Culture And Ethnicity

## A Panorama of Social Archaeology in Russia

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### Introduction

The Russian (Soviet) archaeology is often positioned by western scholars as the Great Unknown (Bulkin et al. 1982:272). And it is in fact justified. For a long period of time, the Soviet archaeology has been hidden behind the Berlin Wall, and only few western archaeologists had visited the USSR and even fewer archaeologists from the USSR traveled abroad. This situation has caused many rumors and false impressions about the field behind the Iron Curtain. However, due to several striking reviews especially by Leo Klejn, the curtain has been lifted (Klejn 1977, 1997; Bulkin et al. 1982).

After perestroika, the curtain disappeared and tighter contacts have been established between the Russian and foreign archaeologists. Since then there were many joint expeditions, organization of international conferences, and publication of books by Russian and foreign authors and edited in Russian and English.<sup>1</sup> After the

<sup>1</sup>For example, cooperation projects between Novosibirsk and German archaeologists to study the Bronze Age Chicha settlement (Baraba Siberia steppe) and burial mounds of Pazyryk culture in Altay, or studies of the Ural Iron Age nomadic burial mounds conducted by colleagues from Ekaterinburg and from U.S.A., or lasting international joint Far-Eastern expedition in medieval Kraskino town to the south of Vladivostok. Collaboration between Russian and Western archaeologists contributed to a number of international conferences in Russian State University of Humanities, University of Chicago, University of Cambridge, Institute of African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow, Arkaim Heritage Center in Chelyabinsk, etc. Results of researches and debates were published in conference proceedings and books (Kradin and Lynsha 1995; Davis-Kimball et al. 2000; Kradin et al. 2000; Boyle et al. 2002; Jones-Bley and Zdanovich 2002; Kradin et al. 2003; Grinin et al. 2004; Petersonet al.2006; Grinin et al. 2008; Linduff and Rubinson 2008; Popova et al. 2008; Hanks and Linduff 2009 etc.).

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