

Network in Eastern European Neolithic and Wetland Archaeology

Scientific Cooperation between Eastern Europe and Switzerland

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ted pile-dwelling settlement at Lake Ohrid, Ploča Michov Grad, North
Macedonia (photo: Marco Hostettler; University of Bern, 2017)

Photograph (back page): Underwater photograph of wooden piles at
Lake Ohrid, Ploča Michov Grad, North Macedonia (photo: Johannes
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Foreword

The aim of this book is to document the activities performed during and arising from the Institutional Partnership of the NEENAWA (Network in Eastern European Neolithic and Wetland Archaeology for the improvement of field techniques and dating methods) project. Over the course of four years, public lectures, research exchanges, organization of workshops, conferences and scientific sessions led to an intense transfer of knowledge between the involved researchers. This book can be considered as a contemporary historical document, how Swiss and Eastern European researchers from Russia, North Macedonia and Ukraine came together in the scope of the NEENAWA partnership. Activity and experience reports keep record of the various actions and events that took place in the partner countries but they also witness to the scientific and structural development of wetland and underwater archaeology in Eastern Europe. Even beyond the partner countries, contacts were established and intensified with other Eastern European states (e.g. Greece, Albania, Lithuania).

During the intense weeks spent together on excavations, excursions or in seminars, friendships developed apart from close scientific collaborations. For both the partners as well as the participants, NEENAWA has been an enriching and fruitful experience. The structural changes affecting institutions or individual researchers reflect important steps in their development and career.

A special emphasis was put on the integration of undergraduate students; many of them continued their scientific career in archaeology, with a special focus on the topics taught during the project. The international collaboration between students ultimately resulted in independent research projects.

Most importantly, during the project, an understanding and appreciation of cultural and structural differences, but also similarities was gained by all involved participants. What started as cooperation between institutions, ended as an equal partnership to the gain of prehistoric archaeology in general and wetland archaeology in particular.

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The information contained in this book is provided on an «as is» basis with no guarantees of completeness, accuracy or quality.

The choice of names or spelling of names used in this volume reflects in no way any sympathy for a particular political or national orientation. Transliteration of Cyrillic names into English was done by the individual authors and might therefore vary between contributions.

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IV.2 PhD Project: The Neolithic Ceramic from the Mariupol Type Cemeteries at the Middle and Lower Dnieper

In April 2018 I have received the letter from the Federal Commission for Scholarships for Foreign Students (FCS) commission that I had been chosen as a candidate for the Swiss Government Excellence Scholarship. And I would say, from that moment started my transfer to Switzerland. I had one summer to prepare myself for a move to my new home in Bern for the next three years. The biggest part of the preparation was preparation on how I can work with Neolithic pottery collections, which are stored in Archive of the Institute Archaeology NAS Ukraine, from abroad. My PhD project is on Neolithic ceramics (7th-5th mill. BC) from the Mariupol type cemeteries at the Middle and Lower Dnieper, Ukraine. The main aim of my study is to establish specific types of vessels depending on the shape/form, the composition of clay and the characteristic ornamentation, and to create a detailed typology and chronology based on it. In addition, I hope to find evidence for migration and social contacts through comparison of the ceramics from the cemeteries with ceramics from settlements.

I expect the following results of my PhD project:

1. Identification of main evolution trends that are characteristic for ceramics from each burial site.
2. A reliable typological classification of Neolithic ceramics of the Lower and Middle Dnieper basin.
3. Identification of ceramic traditions that formed the basis of ceramic production.
4. Identification of ways of migration of populations and identification of networks of communication in the Lower and Middle Dnieper basin.

For me, this scholarship is a big step in my personal development:

- as an academic: the possibility to study and write my doctoral thesis under supervision Prof. Dr. Albert Hafner at the Institute for Archaeological Sciences and Dr. Pavlo Shydlovskiy from Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv;
- as a person: soft skills development, adaptation to a new country, culture, society, and of course languages.

The first year of my doctoral studies was full of scientific interaction at our institute. It started with a perfect and inspiring “dive in” in the new international archaeological community of Swiss PhD and master students, post-doctoral Researchers and professors. It is hard to count the amount of visited open lectures about different topics in archaeology or related to archaeology. Organized colloquiums from the Prehistoric Archaeology and Near Eastern Archaeology departments have always inspired me with new knowledge about archaeological insights and new research methods. I could dive in an atmosphere fascinated by archaeological science and research. That was what I have dreamed about in Ukraine!

To achieve my goals, I have also applied to the Graduate School of Humanities, in the programme “Global Studies”. The programme unites young PhD students and helps them to grow as a scientist, providing them interesting lectures and courses in interdisciplinary areas.

In the Institute of the Archaeological Sciences, I had an opportunity to learn more about Digital Archaeology and started to use statistics with “R” for my research. With Dr. Caroline Heitz, I started to learn how to use the p-XRF analyser and now, we will work with the pottery fragments from Lysa Hora Neolithic cemetery. Also, for the first time, I have visited a radiocarbon (¹⁴C)

laboratory and learned more about technical aspects in material dating. With the big inspiration, I am waiting for new ^{14}C data for the Neolithic cemeteries of Lysa Hora and Mykilske. Another inspiring point for me is the access to the archaeological library at the institute with a huge collection of books from world-famous researchers and publishers, and in all fields of archaeology: from theoretical to digital archaeology, archaeometry, world site descriptions, etc.

During summer 2019, I had a unique chance to join the EXPLO project on Lake Ohrid in Macedonia. For one month, I worked in an international Swiss-Macedonian underwater archaeological team. It was a fascinating experience: I worked with Neolithic and Bronze Age ceramics by cleaning findings and drawing them (fig. 1). Besides, I have assisted our dendrochronologists to prepare all wooden samples for transportation to Switzerland. The fascination about diversity in the archaeological sciences pushed me as well to take diving courses, and now I am on my way to become an Advanced Open Water Diver.

Also, during my study at the Institute of Archaeological Sciences, I have the perfect chance to participate in archaeological conferences. That is a thrilling and important experience for me as a young scientist. And now, I am for the first time organizing a session at the EAA 2020 Virtual Annual Meeting with my colleagues Olha Demchenko and Dr. Martin Hinz. Its topic is: "The Climate Impact on European Neolithic Societies during the 8.2-ky BP Events near River Basins and Lakes Shores".

In addition, I am improving my language skills every day. I have taken the Academic English course to improve my writing skills and German classes became a part of my everyday routine. Now I am in the middle of my way to complete my PhD, and I believe that all-new experience, my colleagues, and friends will push me to successfully complete it. I am happy that Prof. Dr. Albert Hafner believed in me and gave me this awesome chance! I hope the next year will bring even more experience and knowledge!



Fig. 1: Marta Andriovych during work at Mezhirich Upper Paleolithic Site