

РЕЦЕНЗІЇ / REVIEWS

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**CULTURE AND SETTLEMENT CHANGES IN THE RIVER VYSHNIA BASIN  
IN THE BRONZE AND EARLY IRON AGES IN THE CONTEXT  
OF PRE-HISTORICAL AND EARLY MIDDLE AGE**

**(Review on the collective monograph: S. Chopek, K. Trybala-Zavisliak,  
H. Voitseshchuk, O. Osaulchuk, D. Bobak, P. Gembitsa, A. Yatsyshyn, V. Pasterkevich,  
D. Pavliv, V. Petegyrych, V. Poltovich-Bobak, A. Vatsnik. Rzeszów, Wydawnictwo  
Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego Opracowanie, 707 p.)**

**КУЛЬТУРНО-ПОСЕЛЕНСЬКІ ЗМІНИ В БАСЕЙНІ РІЧКИ ВИШНЯ В  
ЕПОХУ БРОНЗИ І ЗА ДОБИ РАНЬОГО ЗАЛІЗА В КОНТЕКСТІ ЗМІН  
ДОІСТОРИЧНОЇ І РАНЬОСЕРЕДНЬОВІЧНОЇ ОЙКУМЕНИ**

**(Рецензія на колективну монографію: С. Чопек, К. Трибала-Завісляк,  
Н. Войцещук, О. Осаульчук, Д. Бобак, П. Гембіца, А. Яцишин, В. Пастеркевіч,  
Д. Павлів, В. Петегірич, М. Полтовіч-Бобак, А. Вацнік. Жешів, Wydawnictwo  
Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego Opracowanie, 707 с.)**

The monograph presents the result of complex long-term research of archaeological finds of the river Vyshnia basin situated on the borderline of two neighboring countries – Ukraine and Poland. This fact was not beneficial for the archeological research in this region since the 1940-ies of the XXth century. However, the situation had considerably changed for the last decades since the Soviet Union split. This monograph serves a bright example of efficient work of investigators from Ukraine and Poland.

It was published thanks to the implementation of the extensive Polish-Ukrainian research project sponsored by the National Center of Science in Krakow “Cultural and Settlement Changes in the river Vyshnia Basin in the Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age in the Context of Changes of Pre-historic and Early Medieval Oikumens” carried out by the Institution of Archeology of Rzeszov University (Poland) and Rescue Archeological Service of the Institution of Archeology of the National Academy of Science in Ukraine. To perform the project the prominent Ukrainian and Polish specialists on archaeology, geology, and paleography were involved at different stages of the archeological research. Silvestr Chopek’s high level editing of the monograph deserves a special attention.

The work is the assumption of long term Ukrainian and Polish research of the archaeological sources in the region. The area of the Vyshnia basin spreading to the considerable part of Ukraine and Poland comprises 1260 km. in the process of the archeological research (excavations, reconnaissance and laboratory-cameral analysis of the material) on this territory 1772 archeological finds were discovered and examined. It is necessary to mention that besides the reconnaissance on the 12 settlements the stationary excavations were carried out being though less extensive and aimed at to clarify the cultural and chronological differences of certain objects. The lion’s share of the revealed archeological finds on the territories of both Ukraine and Poland contains material samples of the Bronze Age and early Iron Age. Nevertheless, the materials belonging to the Stone Age, the Middle Ages and Modern Period were also included to the analysis.

One of the main tasks of the research group was to reveal the importance of the river Vyshnia basin in the process of settlement and bring to light the intercultural contacts during the Stone, Bronze and Early Iron Ages. The river Vyshnia (tributary of the Sian) is located on the border of the Black Sea and Baltic basins. The geographical position influenced the natural climate environment of the region defined as border territory of Central and Eastern Europe.

The introduction of the monograph deals with the history of discoveries and research of the local antiquities performed by archeologists since the second fourth of the XXth century, it provides the characteristics of the source basis and analyzes the results of a modern research of the culture and settlement changes during the Bronze Age and Early Stone Age in the river Vyshnia basin. The authors represent the modern periodization and chronology of the archeological phenomena taking into account the issue of a cultural and chronological situation.

The priority of the Polish archeology played the leading role in the studying of the settlement system of certain territories during various historical periods. It is evidenced by a number of the research works. This project continues the tradition with the participation of Polish and Ukrainian specialists. Apparently this experience should promote the implementation of innovative methods in the Ukrainian research tradition.

In Chapter 2 the natural conditions are characterized as a factor that determines the features of an ancient settlement. Geomorphology and soil description of the territory as well

as palynological studies are considered. On the basis of studying the sequence of layers of the stratigraphic sections and pollen samples from the settlements the monograph suggests the detailed paleoreconstructions implying flora and landscape changes in the river Vyshnia basin in Early Holocene. It lets the authors define the place of the region in the ancient landscape of Central and Eastern Europe.

In Chapters 3–6 a complex analysis of the archeological finds is considered according to a cultural chronological periodization of the pre-historical time and the early Middle Ages of the Vyshnia basin.

Despite the lack of information on paleolithic period the authors make quite bold assumptions related to the first settlement of the territory in the Early Paleolithic. The archeological material gives the opportunity to trace the cultural changes among hunters-gatherers in the Late Pleistocene and the beginning of Holocene during Upper Paleolithic and Mezolithic periods.

Chapter 4 is designed to investigate the antiquities of the Bronze Age and Early Iron Age. This chapter appears to be highly ensured with the archeological data considering the source basis. The author of the chapter is Sylvestr Chopek. The researcher reasonably states that the absence of the only chronological relative system of the Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age in Eastern Europe caused by the considerable area and notable cultural (and civilizational) differences. However, the relative growth of the radiocarbon dates enabled to perform the adequate comparison similar to those taken place in Central Europe. The series of treasures and imported things of the “Overdanubian” origin being found in the southern and south-western regions of Ukraine made possible to synchronize them according to the system of relative chronology of Central Europe offered by Paul Reineke. This chronology is regarded as the universal archeological scale for the borderline territories of Ukraine and Poland.

After the classification of all archeological sources gained in the process of archeological reconnaissance and excavation in the river Vyshnia basin for the Bronze Age and Early Iron Age it offers the following “chain” of cultures: Mezhanovits culture of the Early Bronze Age, Tshenets culture of the Early and Middle Bronze Age, Late Bronze Age has not been studied yet in the cultural aspect, Early Iron time. The last one includes the Late Hallstatt (phases C and D) and the Late La Tene (phases C and D represented by Scythian and Pomeranian-Yastorf circle finds. Each of the defined periods is provided with the detailed system of location of the settlement finds, concentration zones of settlements and cemeteries, analysis of the paleozoological materials, various archeological artifacts etc. Some periods are provided with certain settlement models typical of Sandomyr upland. Main attention is paid to the comparison of the local cultural phenomena being much better studied in the western part of the Vyshnia valley with the synchronic cultures of Central and Eastern Europe.

Chapter 5 of the monograph focuses on the analysis of the cultural changes of the Bronze Age and Early Iron Age regarding the cultural changes in Central-East Europe (Sylvestr Chopek). On the basis of the analysis of some chronological indicators and modern radiocarbon dates the author offers the following scale of the absolute chronology of the antiquities of the region. Late III – first centuries of II century BC – Mezhanovits culture since its early stage; the XVIIIth (XIIth?) BC – the occupation of the new territories by the representatives of Tshchenets culture circle; the XIIIth – IXth centuries BC – the period of a demographical development though with a blurry cultural relation (the population of Tarnobzhesk-Luzhysk or Holograd cultures?); IX – VIII c BC – transitive period between the end of the Bronze Age and the beginning of the Early Iron Age which is still impossible to identify with

a certain culture community; the second half (end) of the VIIth-Vth centuries BC – the period of domination of the local community with the Scythian culture model (Khotynanglomeration); the end of the Vth – IVth centuries BC – the period marked by the emergence of numerous enclaves of Pomeranian culture that could have existed in the IIIrd century BC and appeared to be the part of mixed Pomerania-Yastorf complexes; the end of the IIIrd – the beginning of the IIrd centuries BC – the reveal of later Yastorf materials with possible Celt component.

Thus, a certain connection with the synchronic archeological cultures enabled the authors to find out the participation in the cultural-historical processes taken place in the river Vyshnia basin of both residents and emigrants. It is reasonable to suggest that the lower basin of the river could have belonged to the specific enclave of the “Scythian world” typical of the whole forest-steppe zone of the “Scythian” population in the Central-Eastern Europe and particularly around Khotynets microregion.

Chapter 6 refers to the issues of occupation of the Vyshnia Basin during the pre-Romanian and Romanian periods and in the Early Middle Ages (Natalia Voitseshchuk). Archeological materials of the first half of the I st century AD are represented by the things of the Celtic and Roman origin, the coins and complexes of the so called “Gothic” circle particularly Pshevorsk culture. The issue of the existence of Cherniakhiv culture in the region remains problematic. The next stage (the second half of I c AD) is related to the settlement processes on the provided territory of the early Slavs – the representatives of Prague and Raikovets cultures. Since the beginning of X c in Sian and Vyshnia basins the town centers appeared. One of them was Przhemsl.

Chapter 7 deals with the significance of the Vyshnia basin for the pre-historical settlers and intercultural contacts (Sylvestr Chopek). The materials belonging to all the epochs evidence the inhabitation of the territories throughout the historical periods. The detailed analysis enabled the researchers to reveal the periods of intensive settlement processes and those where one can observe their decrease. The collective monograph includes a lot of illustrative materials and maps, comparative and summarizing charts etc., the catalogue of all the archeological finds in the river Vyshnia basin had been revealed before 2014 and after 2014 – 2016. The catalogue of ceramic materials and archaeological finds represented by CD is attached to the monograph. It is necessary to mention that the edited collective monograph will definitely promote the preserving of the archeological heritage in Poland and Ukraine where the issue is of great importance.

Thus, the monograph serves an example of a modern archeological research aimed at complex investigation of a certain region in a certain water unit. Due to the long term research the authors managed to reconstruct the settlement systems of the territories in various historical periods. Moreover, some periods of a “cultural indefiniteness” are revealed demanding further thorough work to fill in the “gaps”. The presented materials evidence that the authors managed to highlight the peculiarities of the cultural diversion and to raise the new questions about the ancient past of the Vyshnia basin and to define its importance in the history of Central and Eastern Europe. This approach is highly perspective for the research of similar phenomena not only on border territories but in any other regions.

Such monograph serves a bright example of international, interdisciplinary efficient work to reveal, to reconstruct and to preserve the archeological finds in Poland and Ukraine. The results of this monograph should definitely be published in any format.

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