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THE PHASES OF THE NEOLITHIZATION AND EARLY ENEOLITHIZATION OF THE UPPER DNIESTER REGION

This article presents the sequence of Neolithization and early Eneolithization phases of three regions of the Upper Dnister area based on new findings and the revision of existing data. Three phases of Neolithization are proposed in connection with the late Linear Pottery culture and Malicka culture. Three phases of early Eneolithization are also presented, connected to the early and middle periods of the Trypillian culture.

Neolithic – Eneolithic – Upper Dnister region – settlement – chronology

Vývoj osídlení horního Podněstří v neolitu a starším eneolitu. Autoři se v předloženém příspěvku zabývají procesem neolitizace tří regionů horního Podněstří, a to na základě nejnovějších výzkumů a podrobného přehodnocení starších nálezových souborů. Vyčleňují tři fáze neolitizace sledovaného území, jež jsou spojené s pozdními skupinami kultury s lineární keramikou a s malickou kulturou. Časný eneolit se dělí opět do tří období, která podle jejich zjištění zahrnují vývoj v rané a střední fázi trypilské kultury.

neolit – eneolit – horní Podněstří – osídlení – chronologie

The Upper Dniester area has been labelled a contact zone between cultures of different origin by some scholars (*Dergachev 1999,* 170, 211–218). This territory can be divided into southern, central (Halych micro-region) and northern regions. The southern part covers the territory from Nezvisko up to Izupil, the central part spreads from Izupil up to Burshtyn, and the northern part spreads from Burshtyn up to the source of the Dniester River.

During the Mesolithic Period the Upper Dniester area was occupied by a hunting and fishing population of the Nezvisko-Oselivka culture (*Mackevyj – Panahyd 2008*, 42). The first well-established farming community introduced to the Upper Dniester was the "Music Note" phase of the Linear Pottery culture. The sharp changes in the Neolithic would seem to imply immigration, or at least foreign influence. These first farmers arrived perhaps from the Malopolska (Little Poland) area some time around 5400 BC. They occupied a wide expanse of territory in the Upper Dniester. Many settlements have been discovered (fig. 1). For the start of this period we have only three radiocarbon dates from Bilshivtsi I.

	Site	Lab. number	Material	Conv. BP	Cal. BC (OxCal 4.1)
1	Bilshivtsi I	Ki-8076	bone	6330 ± 70 BP	95.4% probability 5475 (91.4%) 5207 cal BC 5163 (1.7%) 5136 cal BC 5130 (0.7%) 5119 cal BC 5106 (1.6%) 5079 cal BC
2	Bilshivtsi I	Ki-8077	bone	6450 ± 80 BP	95.4% probability 5607 (0.8%) 5595 cal BC 5561 (93.4%) 5296 cal BC 5250 (1.3%) 5230 cal BC
3	Bilshivtsi I	Ki-8078	bone	6280 ± 80 BP	95.4% probability 5467 (6.0%) 5403 cal BC 5387 (89.4%) 5047 cal BC

Tab. 1. Radiocarbon dates from Bilshivtsi I.

Calibration would put them around 5350–5200 BC (*Kotova 2002*, 92). Samples of sherds from the "Music Note Phase" excavated at the Golychiv site in the Volhynia area gave very similar dates of around 5350–5200 BC (*Kotova – Kovaluh – Manko – Ohrimenko 2007*, 415).

A rich deposit of ceramic material, bones and flint material was found in pits at the Bilshivtsi I settlement. The most common pottery shapes are more or less globular bowls. Two sorts of pottery occur. The fine made pot has a grey surface and is polished and incised before firing. As for designs, there are some standard characteristics, followed by variation in detail. All decoration was carried out using incised curves or spirals. The polished surfaces could also be covered with horizontal or vertical lines. "Kitchenware" was more variable in color, not polished, and if decorated, merely with finger print and boss. Shapes of this ware are globular too (fig. 2).

One sherd from Bilshivtsi I had a finger-tip pinching, like those from the Koros culture (*Larina 1999*, 101). A few sherds of a globular bowl with decorated incised vertical zigzags and two opposed bosses were also recovered. These sherds from a big pit were all layered with the local Linear Pottery sherds. These motifs usually did not occur on fine made pottery. This bowl probably indicates the influence of the Tisadob group decoration tradition (*Šiška 1989*, 88, 96).

Only a few small obsidian pieces were found on Linear Pottery culture settlements of the Upper Dniester area such as Bilshivtsi I and Markivtsi. This shiny black volcanic glass was highly prized in prehistory. It is found only in restricted and scattered places, giving it a rarity value. This is why it was traded widely from very early times (*Trump 2008*, 38, 66). In Central Europe, the only sources of obsidian are on the Zemplin-Presov Plateau in Slovakia and southeast Hungary. The basaltic chisel from Bilshivtsi I could also be connected with Transcarpathian volcanic deposits.

Recent excavations by Prof. Alexander Sytnik from Lviv University uncovered new evidence with respect to the Neolithization of the Upper Dniester area. The

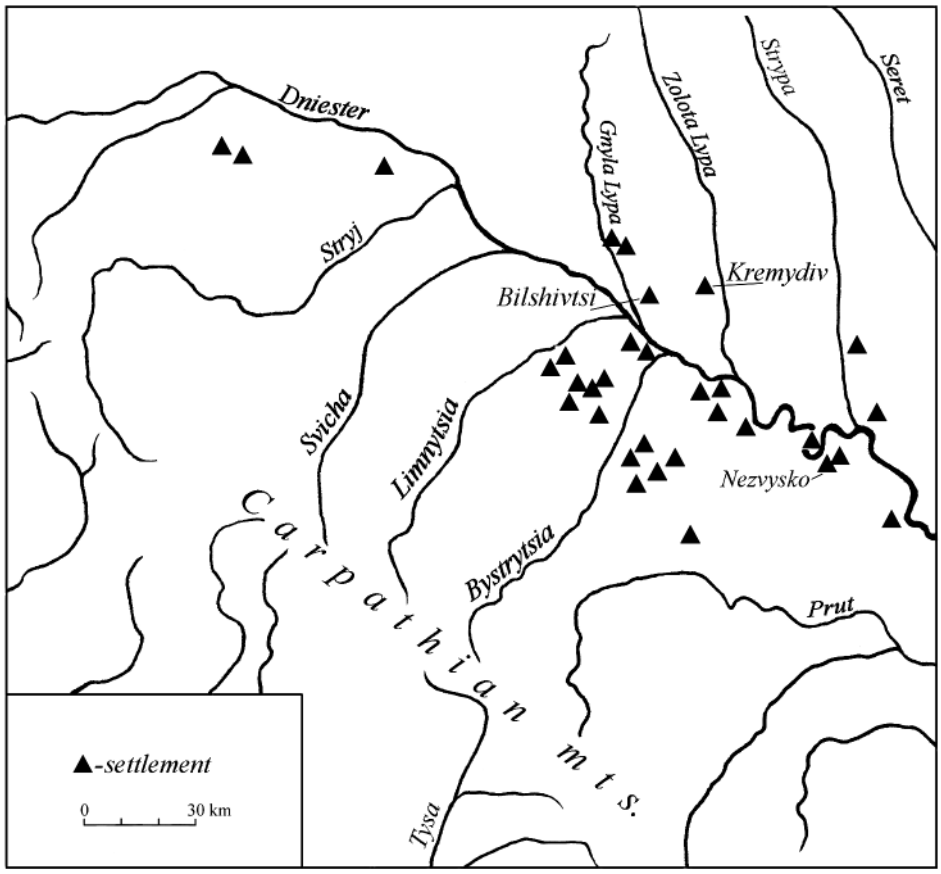

Fig. 1. Distribution map of the Neolithic Linear Pottery culture ("Music Note" phase) settlements in the Upper Dniester region.

Zelezovce phase settlement at Izupil was discovered on the right bank of the Dniester River. This is still the only settlement of this phase in the Upper Dniester area. The appearance of the Zelezovce site shows that there was resultant cultural influence from Slovakia at around 5200–5000 BC (*Kadrow – Zakoscielna 2000*, 190–192). Unfortunately, we do not currently have radiocarbon dates for Izupil. The Zelezovce phase settlement at Izupil coexisted with the latest Linear Pottery culture on the left bank of the Dniester and in the northern part of the area.

A quite unexpected discovery from the excavations at Kozyna was a site that had been occupied by an early Eneolithic Trypillian population at around 4700 BC. They probably came from the Middle Dniester area, where we have a radiocarbon dated Luka-Vrublivecka site (*Burdo 2002*, 439). Pottery from Luka-Vrublivecka is very similar to that found at Kozyna (fig. 3). A rich deposit of material was found in a pit, fortunately not disturbed by modern construction, giving useful evidence on pottery. The vessels were shaped like bowls or dishes; some were decorated. White

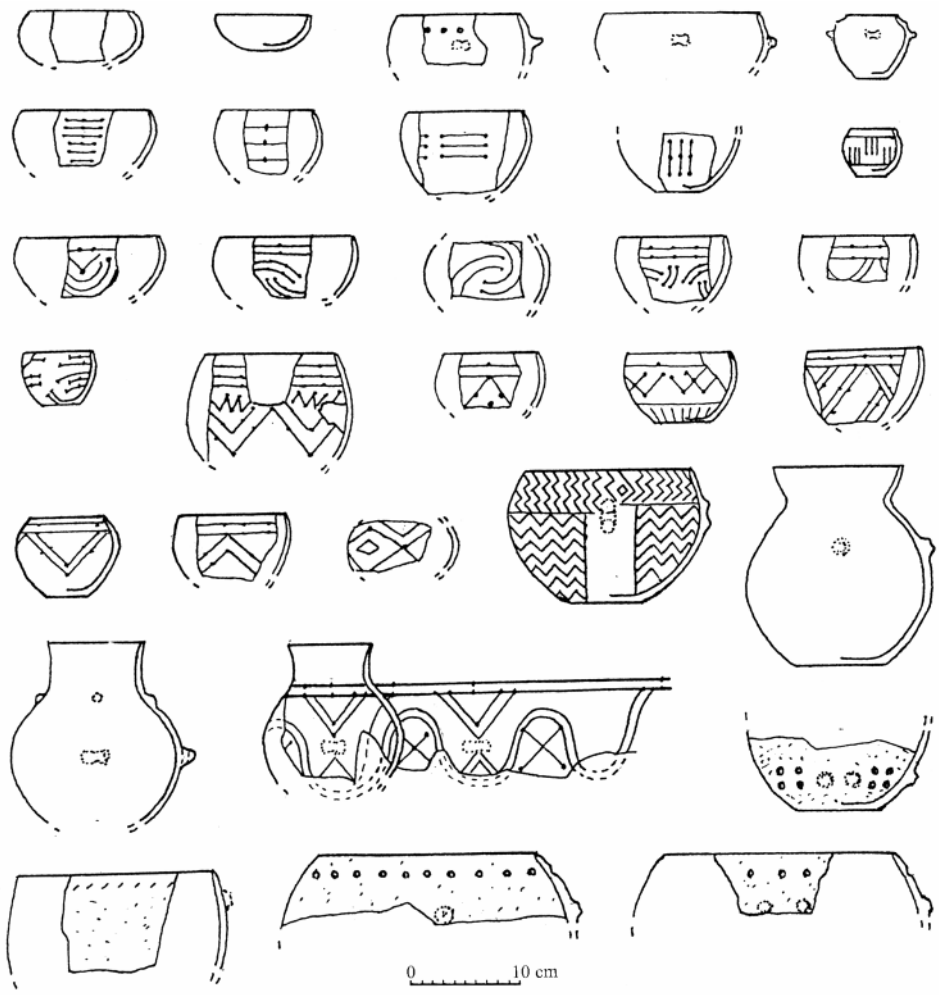

Fig. 2. Neolithic pottery of the Linear Pottery culture ("Music Note" phase) from the Bilshivtsi I site.

or red painting was scarcely used. The surfaces of some pots had been incised or channeled before firing. Same pots have hole pedestals.

	Site	Lab. number	Material	Conv. BP	Cal. BC (OxCal 4.1)
1	Luka-Vrublivecka	Ki-6884	bone	5905 ± 60 BP	95.4% probability 4942 (93.2%) 4652 cal BC 4641 (2.2%) 4617 cal BC
2	Luka-Vrublivecka	Ki-6685	bone	5845 ± 55 BP	95.4% probability 4831 (95.4%) 4551 cal BC

Tab. 2. Radiocarbon dates from Luka-Vrublivecka.

This site is of particular interest for two reasons. Firstly, the evidence for the earliest occupation of the Upper Dnister area by a Trypillian population was a considerable surprise. Secondly, this site could be regarded as neighboring the late phase Linear Pottery culture area.

At around 4800–4500 BC the classical phase of the Malicka culture occupied a wide expanse of territory mainly in Malopolska, the northern part of western Ukraine, and the western part of Volhynia (*Kadrow – Zakoscielna 2000*, 200–204; *Kadrow 2006*, 64). The population of the Malicka culture classical phase 1b also occupied the northern part of the left bank of the Upper Dniester area. Zaliski settlements in this territory have recently been discovered (*Bandrivskij – Krushelnycka 2002*).

The Stroked Pottery culture influence is evident in the decoration of the pottery. Some wares like bi-conical beakers were decorated with stroked chevrons,

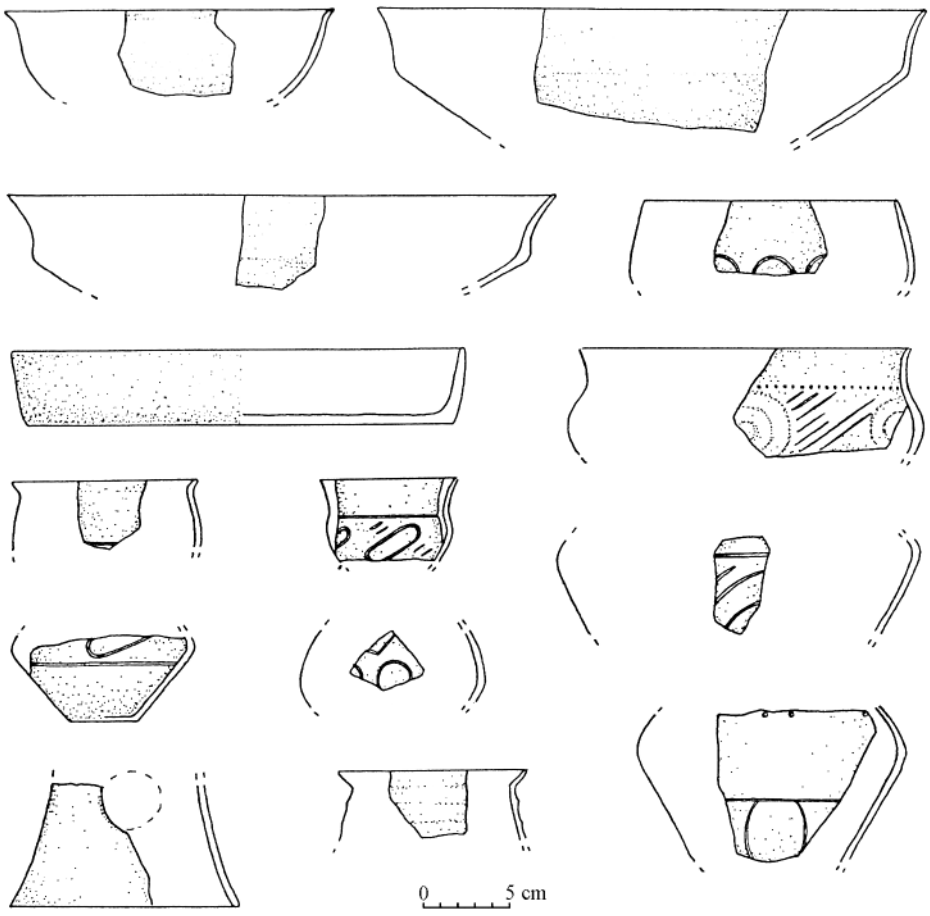

Fig. 3. Early Eneolithic pottery of the Trypillia culture from the Kozyna site.

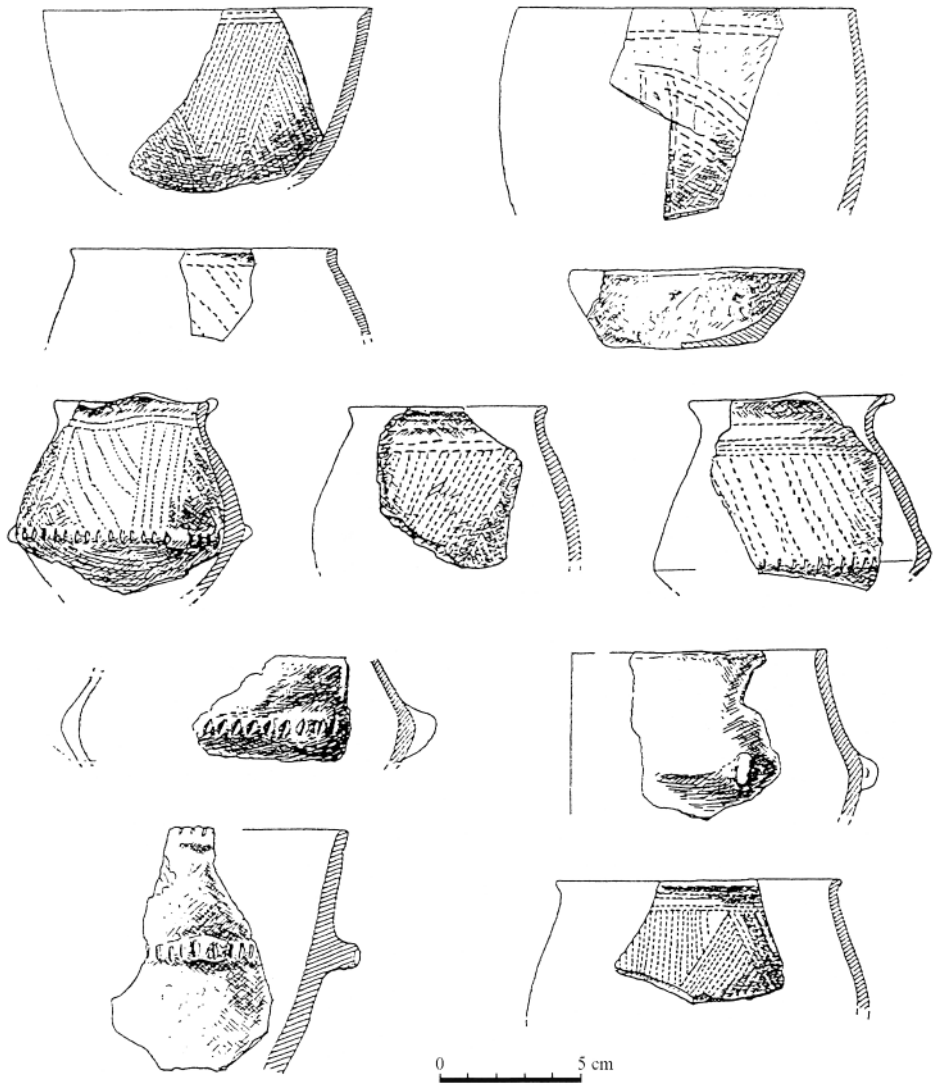

Fig. 4. Neolithic pottery of the Malicka culture from the Zaliski site (after *Bandrivskyj – Krushelnycka 2002*).

diagonals, and horizontals lines. Belly shoulders sometimes have small bosses. In addition, there are also small amphorae and vessels on a hollow foot or pedestal (fig. 4).

The Nezvisko II settlement represents a new wave of colonists. These new Trypillian people probably came to the southern part of the right bank of the Upper Dniester area from the Middle Dniester territory (*Chernysh 1962*). We have a few dates from this site (*Kovaluh – Skrypkin – Videiko 2007*, 75).

	Site	Lab. number	Material	Conv. BP	Cal. BC (OxCal 4.1)
1	Nezvisko II	Ki-11446	bone	5605 ± 60 BP	95.4% probability 4553 (95.4%) 4337 cal BC
2	Nezvisko II	Ki-11447	bone	5620 ± 100 BP	95.4% probability 4707 (94.1%) 4324 cal BC 4288 (1.3%) 4268 cal BC
3	Nezvisko II	Ki-11448	bone	5505 ± 100 BP	95.4% probability 4547 (84.5%) 4219 cal BC 4213 (5.3%) 4149 cal BC 4135 (5.6%) 4054 cal BC
4	Nezvisko II	Ki-11449	bone	5560 ± 100 BP	95.4% probability 4684 (2.3%) 4633 cal BC 4623 (92.5%) 4232 cal BC 4192 (0.5%) 4179 cal BC

Tab. 3. Radiocarbon dates from Nezvisko II.

The pottery of Nezvisko II follows directly on from that of Middle Dniester settlements phase BI development of the Trypillia culture. Technically, the pottery is very competent. Firing conditions were controlled in closed kilns. The clay was fired in an oxidizing atmosphere to give an orange surface. The pots' surfaces could be incised or painted before firing. Many sorts of decoration occur. The most common and most characteristic are spirals following the shapes of the pottery. Polished pottery surfaces could also be covered with ovals, diagonals, or chevrons (fig. 5).

The change to the BI–BII phase is well defined and would seem to imply occupation of the southern part, the Halych micro-region, and part of the northern part of the Upper Dniester area by Trypillian populations (fig. 6). For this period we have two radiocarbon dates. The first date is from the Bilshivtsi II settlement and the second is from the Chomiakivka I settlement.

	Site	Lab. number	Material	Conv. BP	Cal. BC (OxCal 4.1)
1	Bilshivtsi II	Ki-8086	bone	5520 ± 80 BP	95.4% probability 4543 (94.4%) 4231 cal BC 4194 (1.0%) 4176 cal BC
2	Chomiakivka I	Ki-11484	ceramic	5480 ± 100 BP	95.4% probability 4516 (0.4%) 4510 cal BC 4504 (95.0%) 4050 cal BC

Tab. 4. Radiocarbon dates from Trypillian settlements in the Upper Dniester region.

Based on the production type and the shapes of the pottery, these belong to the BI phase of the Trypillian chronology. The pottery shows a wide variation. There are small and big cups, conical and spherical dishes, bowls, and jars. The more

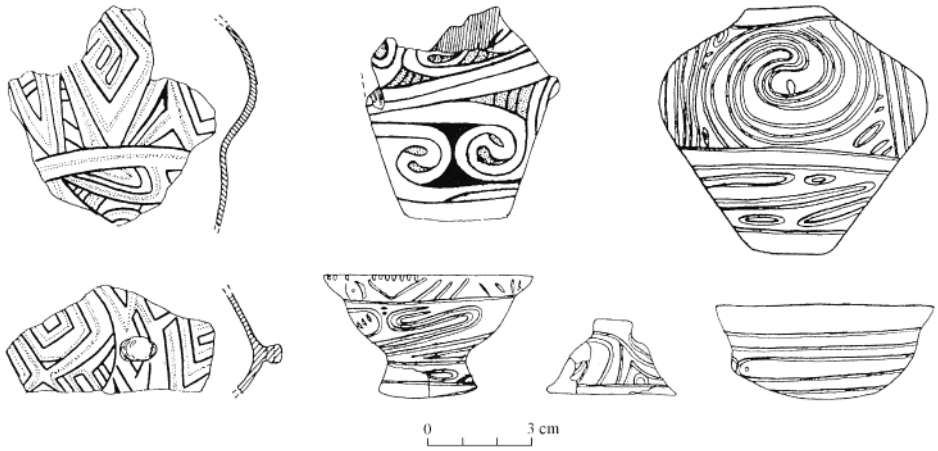

Fig. 5. Middle Eneolithic pottery of the Trypillia culture from the Nezvisko II site (after *Chernysh 1962*).

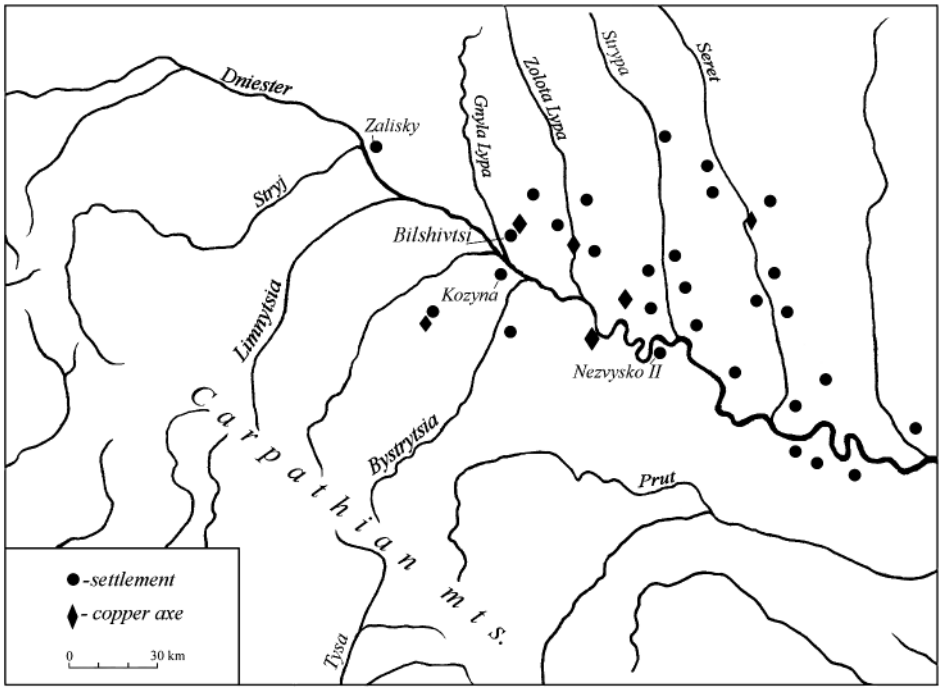

Fig. 6. Distribution map of the Middle Eneolithic settlements of the Zalischiki group and the finds of copper axes in the Upper Dniester region.

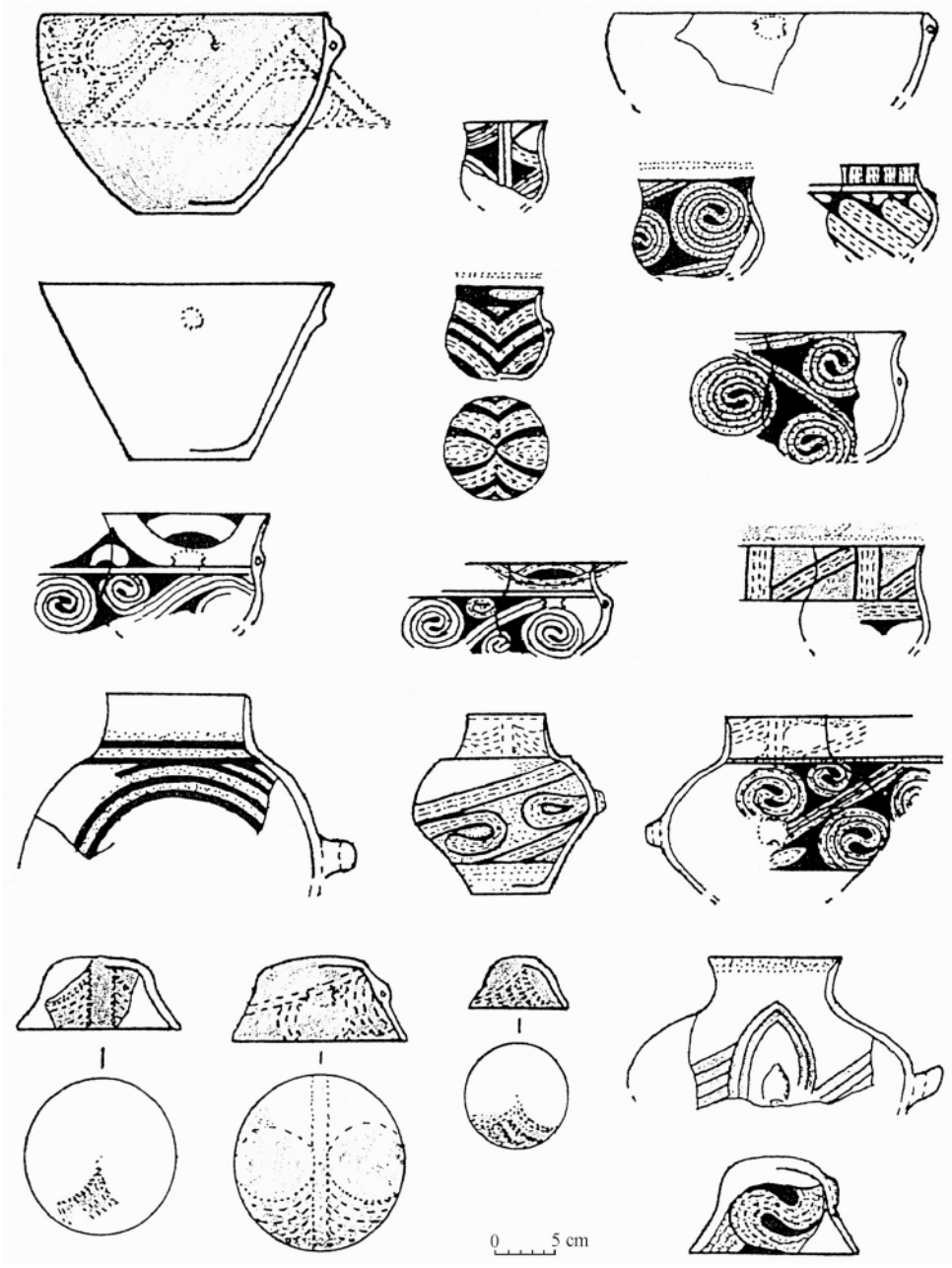

Fig. 7. Middle Eneolithic pottery of the Trypillia culture (Zalischiki group) from the Bilshivci II site.

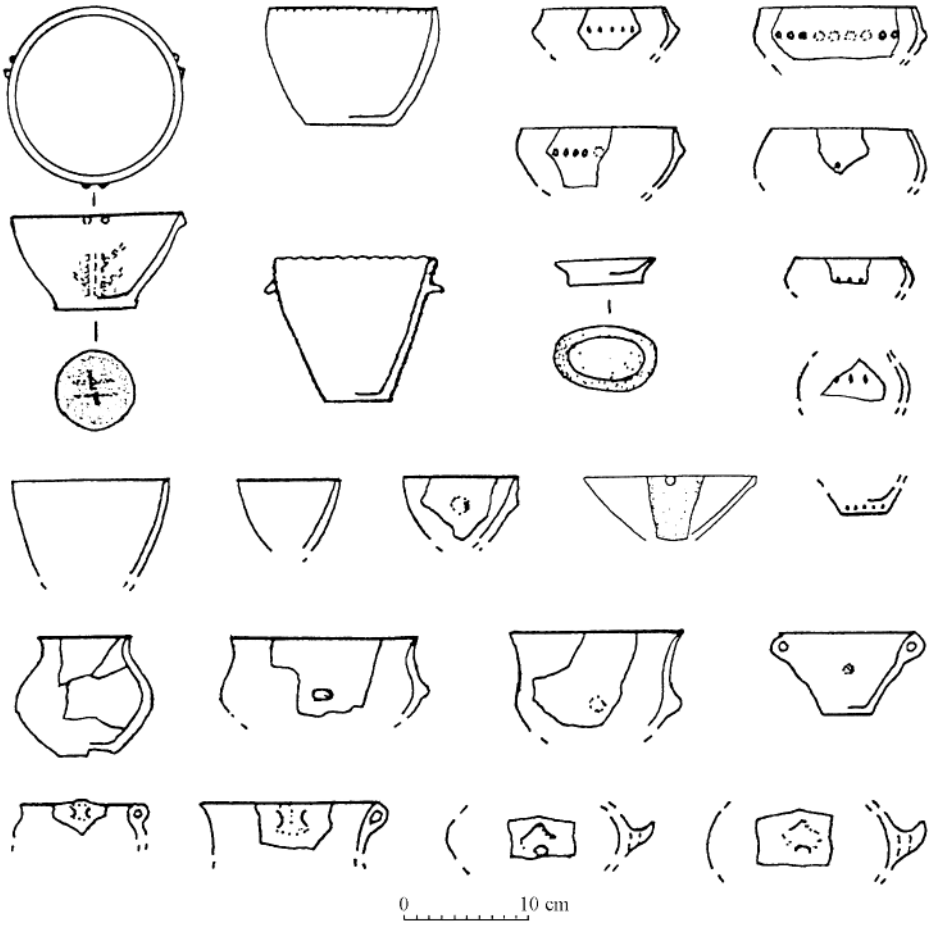

Fig. 8. “Imports” and imitations of Malicka and Lublin-Volhynian pottery from the Bilshivci II site.

typical jars have two opposed horizontal handles on their shoulders. Horizontal handles on the rim or shoulders occur on more cup-like vessels. These vessels are all painted. The pot surface was not incised. This practice had been completely abandoned by this time (fig. 7).

To date, Bilshivtsi II is still the only site to give detailed evidence on the economy of the BI–BII phase of Upper Dniester prehistory. The contents of the household pits from this site were particularly informative. From them we recovered domestic animal remains, most commonly from cattle, pigs, horses, and sheep. Dog remains were also present. Wild animals were also represented. The evidence, then, strongly suggests an economy based on mixed farming. Securing an adequate supply of food was, of course, not the only aspect of economics. The

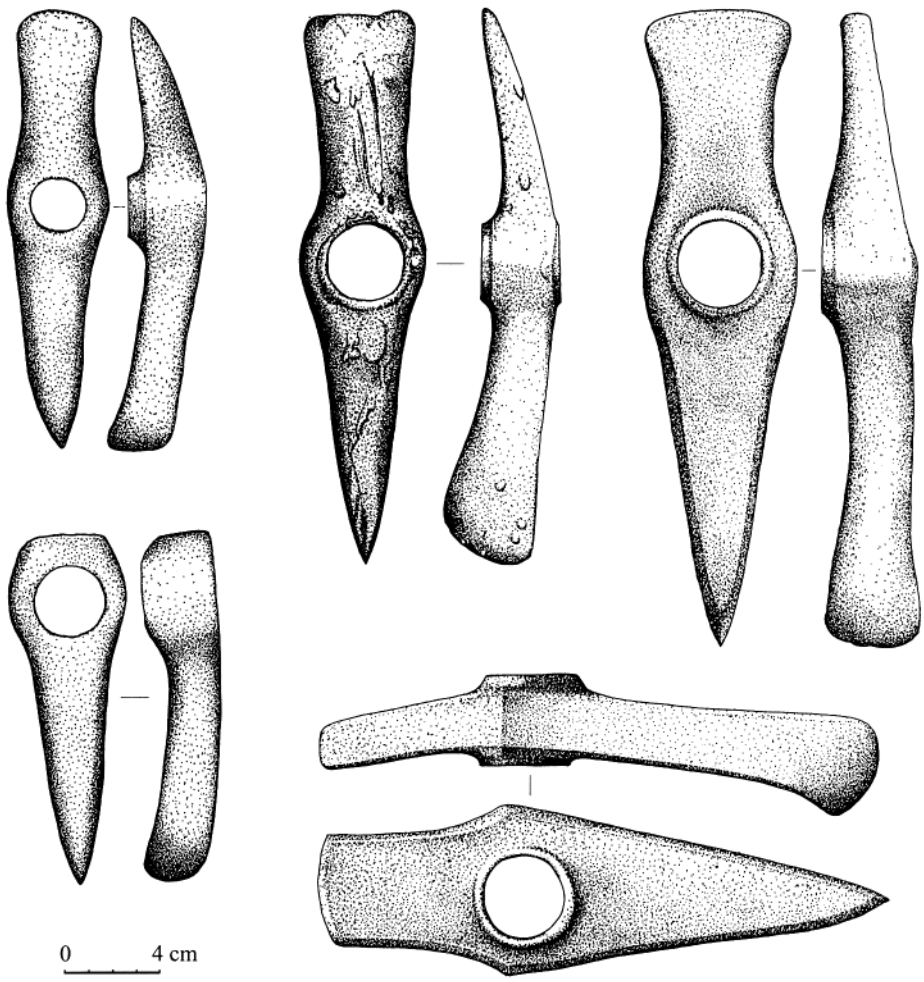

Fig. 9. Copper axes from the Zalischiki group sites (after *Konoplia – Kochkin 1999*).

main industry was the manufacturing of pottery. The raw materials were generally available.

Trade was another special aspect of the economy which requires separate consideration. It has been suggested that some of the pottery types were the result of influence or trade from the Malicka and Lublin-Volhynia cultures. These imports and imitations are separated into two chronological horizons. Early imports are concentrated in the Upper Dniester area, at sites belonging to the Zalischiki group (Bilshivtsi II, Viktoriv, Korzova, Chomiakivka). They can be dated to the end of phase Ic and IIa of the Malicka culture and to the beginning of phase II of the Lublin-Volhynia culture (4350–4000 BC). Late imports from the Malicka and Lublin-Volhynia cultures are connected with some influence of phase IIb of the

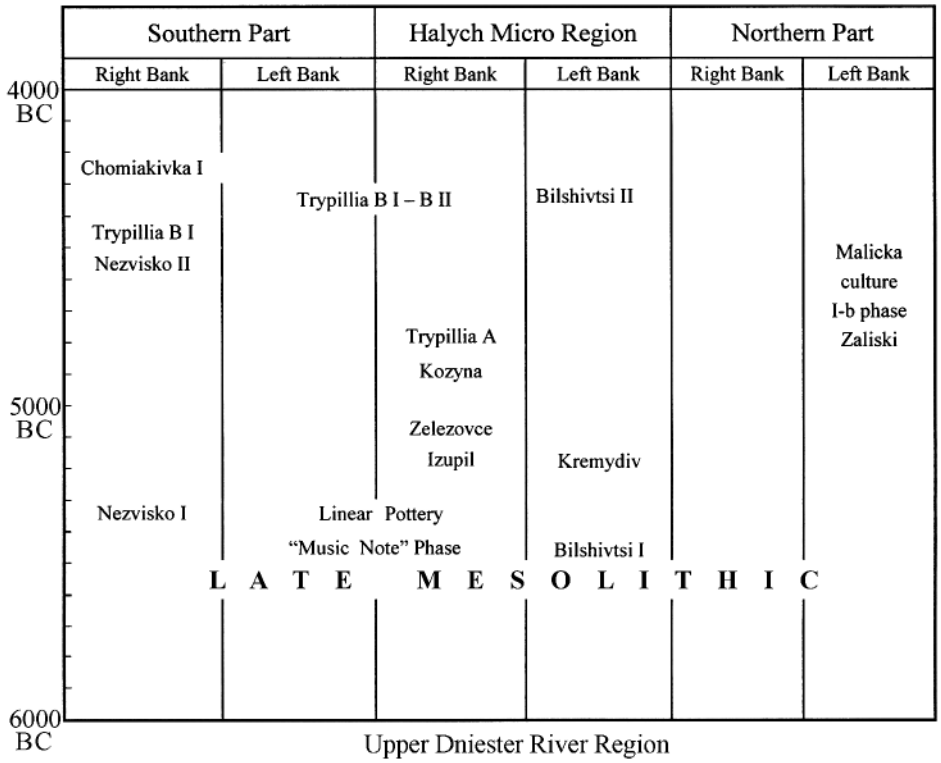

Fig. 10. New chronology of the Neolitization and early Eneolithization of the Upper Dniester region.

Malicka culture and phase II of the Lublin-Volhynia culture (4000–3800 BC) (fig. 8; *Tkaczuk 2005*, 155; *Kochkin 2003*; *Kadrow – Zakoscielna 2000*, 213–240, 254).

The population of the Zalischiki group brought the knowledge of metal with them. By this date, the use of copper was quite widespread throughout the Upper Dnister area, and has been known from many settlements (fig. 9; *Konoplia – Kochkin 1999*, 7). The copperware came from the Transcarpathian area as a result of trade.

We have already discussed the mechanisms of this "trade" in an earlier section. The pottery is certainly all imported and one is tempted to regard such pieces as resulting from trade. However, they are particular unlikely to have had any commercial value themselves, and could all have been produced locally if needed. Open bowls could hardly have served as containers for some tradable commodity. According to Trump, the situation appears to be more casual than this – the pottery is a by-product of more meaningful exchanges or even merely "souvenirs from a holiday abroad" (*Trump 2008*, 39).

Thus, in this paper, we present a new chronology of the phases of Neolithization and early Eneolitization inspired by new discoveries (fig. 10). However, we

must point out that this study opens up a number of further questions, which we cannot yet answer.

We would like to thank Prof. Alexander Sytnik from Lviv University for permission to use his material, Dr Alexey Nikitin from Grand Valley State University and Matthew Nicholls for polishing our English text. We would also like to thank Dr Jaromír Kovárník from Hradec Kralové University for the abstract in Czech.

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VÝVOJ OSÍDLENÍ HORNÍHO PODNĚSTŘÍ V NEOLITU A STARŠÍM ENEOLITU

V horním Podněstří je možné rozdělit neolitické osídlení do tří hlavních chronologických stupňů. První stupeň představuje kultura s lineární keramikou (fáze s notovými značkami), která se sem rozšířila z Malopolska kolem roku 5400 př. n. l. a zabrala více méně celý tento region. Začátek druhého stupně spadá do doby kolem roku 5200 př. n. l., kdy lid želiezovské skupiny osídlil pravý břeh Dněstru (haličský mikroregion); pravděpodobně koexistoval s obyvatelstvem pozdní LnK. Třetí stupeň neolitického osídlení začal v době kolem roku 4700 př. n. l., kdy byla severní část levobřežního Podněstří obsazena lidem malické kultury. V tomto období se na pravém břehu Dněstru objevily první osady patřící nositelům trypilské kultury, což můžeme v rámci regionu považovat za počátek eneolitu. Druhý stupeň eneolitického vývoje představuje fáze BI trypilské kultury. V době kolem 4500 až 4400 př. n. l. se osídlení trypilské kultury (fáze BI–II) rozšířilo v jižní části pravobřežního Podněstří. Ve třetím eneolitickém stupni, asi v letech 4300–4200 př. n. l., byla severní část regionu obsazena lidem zališčické skupiny trypilské kultury (fáze BI–II).

Obr. 1. Mapa horního Podněstří s vyznačenými sídlišti kultury s lineární keramikou (fáze s notovými značkami).
Obr. 2. Keramika LnK (fáze s notovými značkami) ze sídliště Bilšivci I.
Obr. 3. Časně eneolitická keramika trypilské kultury z lokality Kozyna.
Obr. 4. Keramika malické kultury z lokality Zaliski (podle *Bandrivskyj – Krushelnycka 2002*).
Obr. 5. Keramika trypilské kultury ze sídliště Nezvisko II, střední eneolit (podle *Chernysh 1962*).
Obr. 6. Mapa horního Podněstří se sídlišti patřícími zališčické skupině trypilské kultury a s nálezy měděných seker (střední eneolit).
Obr. 7. Keramika trypilské kultury (zališčická skupina) z lokality Bilshivci II, střední eneolit.
Obr. 8. „Importy" a napodobeniny malické a lublinsko-volyňské keramiky ze sídliště Bilšivci II.
Obr. 9. Měděné sekery z lokalit zališčické skupiny (podle *Konoplia – Kochkin 1999*).
Obr. 10. Chronologické schéma vývoje osídlení horního Podněstří v neolitu a starém eneolitu.