

Historiography and Scientific Research of Religious Buildings of the Cucuteni-Trypillian Culture

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The purpose of this article is to reveal the historiography and current state of research related to the cult buildings of the Eneolithic period of the Cucuteni-Trypillian cultural community. The article describes the historical path of archaeological discoveries, from the first Trypillian sanctuaries to the discovery of the largest Nebelivka temple complex in Ukraine in 2012. At the same time, the work partially raises the issue of religious beliefs of the ancient farmers of Central Europe in connection with the discovery of their sacred buildings. Since special scientific works have not comprehensively addressed this issue and are still fragmentary in nature, it is important at the present stage of research to make some coverage and systematization of existing materials on this issue.

Keywords: Trypillia culture, Cucuteni-Trypillia culture, eneolithic, temple, prehistoric religion

Introduction

The discovery of the Trypillian horizon religious buildings should be considered against the general background of research related to Trypillian settlements. After all, the scientific discourse on sanctuaries, and later temples at Trypillian settlements, was formed gradually in the process of global systematization of archaeological knowledge and the isolation of the factual base related to sacred buildings of the Eneolithic period. Therefore, the accumulation of knowledge about the sacred nature of Cucuteni-Trypillia and their sacred complexes should begin with the very discovery of this culture in the 19th century.

The first excavations of Trypillian culture settlements took place in the 1870s near the villages of Koshylivtsi and Bilche Zolote (today Ternopil region, Ukraine). They were conducted by A. Schneider and H. Ossovskiy (Videiko, 2014, p. 6). The first documentary information about field research of Trypillian monuments was recorded in 1891-1893 and is associated with the activities of the Zborovskiy family. That was when the father, Ch. Zborovskiy, began his amateur collections of archaeological material. Later, his son, I. Zborovskiy, wrote that in 1893 his father, living in the village of Krynychky (Ukraine), collected materials of an unknown archaeological culture found by chance in different places of this settlement. Ch. Zborovskiy handed over all the “shards of dishes, whole small cups, and clay figurines” to the Ukrainian historian, ethnographer, and archaeologist V. Antonovych. The latter, interested in the monument, conducted excavations in Krynychky in

1894-1896 (Rud, 2018, pp. 26-27). Another of the first sites where excavations of Trypillian antiquities were carried out was the village of Shypyntsi (Ukraine), located on the left bank of the Prut river. The first finds were discovered here in 1893, when a local teacher V. Areichuk, while doing household work, found painted clay pottery (Kvitkovskiy et al., 1956, p. 63). Thanks to Baron M. Mustiaka, the director of the Vienna "Art and History Museum" J. Sombatti learned about the finds from the village of Shypyntsi, who in the same year conducted excavations in the settlement together with R. Kindl and E. Kostin (Mykhailyna & Pyvovarov, 1987, pp. 244-245). The same years of the first explorations also saw the discovery of Trypillian culture by V. Khvoika in 1893 (Kolesnikova, 2006, p. 14). He discovered the first Trypillian settlement on the territory of Ukraine in Kyiv city at 55 Kyrylivska Street. "In the spring of 1895, I continued the excavations begun in 1893 in the estate of Mr. Zivalii, on Kyrylivska Street" (Vikenty Khvoyka), V. Khvoika wrote in his field diary. In 1896-1897, Khvoika found materials similar to the Kyiv finds in the vicinity of the town of Trypillia, Kyiv district (now the village of Trypillia, Obukhiv district, Kyiv region, Ukraine), which we now know well as the Trypillian culture. It originated in the late 6th millennium B.C., east of the Carpathian Mountains and spread to the territories of modern Ukraine, Moldova, and Romania. It should be added that the first excavations to replenish a private collection with Trypillian antiquities were carried out in 1750, and the famous Verteba cave (Ternopil region, Ukraine) was accidentally discovered in 1822.

The discovery of the Trypillian culture took place under the definition of "sacred, ancestral places" (Trypillia, 1940, p. 24) that belonged to "the people, a branch of the Aryan tribe, which rightfully belongs to the name of the Proto-Slavs and whose descendants still inhabit southwestern Russia" (Khvoyka). Khvoika made this conclusion on the basis of several elongated Trypillian skulls and other material remains discovered during the excavations. Hence, V. Khvoika calls the Trypillian culture "ancient Aryan" and characterizes it as "Proto-Slavic" (Khvoyko, 1901, p. 10). It is worth noting that it is still not known where the human remains from V. Khvoika's first excavations are stored. It is also not known that these remains have been studied by anthropologists. Now we can only marvel at the archaeologist's incredible insight, because over 130 years of research, we have to talk more and more about the sacredness and sacredness of Trypillian settlements.

Discovery of Trypillian Sanctuaries in the First Half of the XX Century

V. Khvoika was one of the first to conduct excavations in the Kolomyishchyna tract near the village of Khalepia (now Obukhiv district, close to Kyiv city), where in the very center of the settlement there was a sacred building (according to modern research (Zavaliy, 2021) of ancient farmers. It is not known whether he succeeded in excavating it, but later Soviet archaeological science became particularly interested in this place. Thus, from 1934 to 1938, the Institutes of the History of Material Culture of the Ukrainian SSR and the USSR Academy of Sciences under the leadership of S. Mahura conducted thorough excavations at the Kolomyishchyna tract (Encyclopedia of Modern Ukraine). At the Trypillian settlement near the Kolomyishchyna tract, 39 buildings were found, which are located in two concentric circles. The diameter of the inner circle was 50-60m, the outer circle was 170m in diameter, and in the center of this conditional circle were the two largest buildings in the settlement, with an area of 140m² and 90m². All other dwellings seemed to be subordinate to these buildings, facing the central entrances to them (Trypillia, 1940, pp. 9-33).

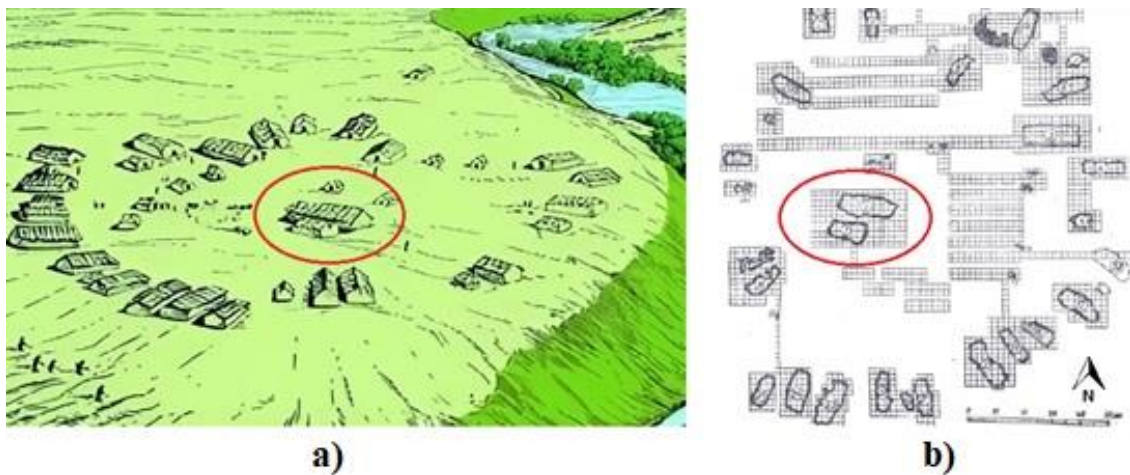


Figure 1. Trypillian settlement Kolomyishchyna with central buildings highlighted in red. (a) Graphic reconstruction of the settlement; (b) Geomagnetic survey of the settlement.

The central buildings of the settlement were completely excavated and recognized as large household warehouses. “Was it not here that grain was stored and then milled?” (Trypillia, 1940, p. 495)—Soviet scholars ask themselves. Given that these excavations were best covered in the publication of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic “Trypillian Culture” (1940), according to all known archaeological facts, the largest building from the Kolomyishchyna settlement today claims to be a sanctuary of the Trypillian period (Zavali, 2021). This may be the first Trypillian sacred building to be revealed to the world.

In 1939, at a distance of one and a half kilometers from the Kolomyishchyna settlement, another Trypillian settlement was discovered, which was called Kolomyishchyna II. It is characteristic that both settlements were built in the form of a circle, located on the slope of a high beam on the eastern side, with rivers adjacent to them, and in the center of the settlement in both cases there were the largest buildings facing the sunrise. It is important to note that both at Kolomyishchyna I (named after the discovery of a neighboring settlement) and at Kolomyishchyna II there were discovered, according to Soviet archaeology, so-called “kuchi”—mounds of fragments of ceramics, figurines, remnants of clay coatings of buildings, broken tools, fragments of animal bones, and shell rock (Passek, 1949, p. 56). Such organized “kuchi” in ancient Trypillian settlements are defined by modern archaeologists as “mounds of memory” that were built after the ritual burning of the entire settlement and served to perpetuate the ancestral habitats (Early Urbanism in Europe, 2020, p. 221). Thus, the Trypillian settlements investigated by Soviet archaeologists nearby the modern Ukrainian village of Khalepia (Ukraine), in addition to similar forms of construction, also had similar forms of ritual activities. Hence, the largest central buildings in the settlement facing the sunrise would have performed similar functions. However, Soviet scholars have a different opinion: in the center of Kolomyishchyna II there was a “community house” where the family group lived (Passek, 1949, p. 58). For objective reasons, we have one significant question and comment to this formulation. If the house in the center of the Kolomyishchyna II settlement was occupied, so to speak, by a collective with a community and clan social organization, then who lived in the smaller houses that were located around the settlement? Families with a paired social organization probably lived there. But such a mixed organization has not been studied in Trypillian settlements, and it is even more impossible in settlements of such small size.

We should recall that in the case of the central building from Kolomyishchyna I, which has similar characteristics to the central building of Kolomyishchyna II, Soviet scholars define it by its economic composition (Trypillia, 1940, p. 484). It is unlikely that the recognized high standardization in Trypillian planning, construction, and ideological organization of settlements would have strikingly distinguished buildings with the same existing organization in the same territory of distribution and in the same historical time. At the same time, the identification of the central building from Kolomyishchyna I as a probable sanctuary of the Trypillian period (Zavali, 2021) creates prospects for an identical definition of the building or few buildings from Kolomyishchyna II. Archaeologist O. Tsvek suggested that the large building from Kolomyishchyna II was intended for ritual purposes (Tsvek, 2002, p. 53). Thus, we refer the above-mentioned central buildings from Trypillian settlements near the modern village of Halepia (Ukraine) to the historical sources of this study.

In general, as of 1940, Soviet science reported on 61 discovered settlements of the Trypillian culture (Trypillia, 1940, p. 10), and in 1949 it reported on 94 settlements (Materials and research..., 1949, p. 13), and no mention of buildings with signs of ideological or sacred function. As historian and archaeologist M. Videiko notes about those times: “Soviet science classified all the research on Trypillian culture that took place before 1937, and the researchers were shot. The Soviet authorities, like the tsarist authorities in the nineteenth century, could not allow the Ukrainian people to have such an eloquent page in their historical achievements as the Trypillian culture. Before the October Revolution, more than 300 private collections of Trypillian culture were gathered on the territory of Ukraine, which were then “preserved” and hidden somewhere” (Videiko, 2008). At about the same time, after an expedition to the Carpathians, a geneticist, botanist, and academician of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union, M. Vavilov, was arrested in Chernivtsi. He worked to identify the centers of origin of cultivated plants and, specifically, the origin of wheat varieties of ancient peoples. In the Carpathian Mountains of Ukraine, the academician managed to identify wild wheat that is genetically related to wheat found in Trypillian settlements, which was a deadly discovery for the scientist (Zavali, 2021). It is worth noting that plant genetics, like human genetics, can reveal its origin and distribution areas. In Soviet times, they tried to attribute Trypillia to a culture not of local origin, but entirely to the farmers of the Mediterranean, who migrated in migration waves themselves and took their grain with them. Academician M. Vavilov became a threat to such theories, because the grain variety of ancient farmers turned out to be of autochthonous origin.

M. Vavilov was sentenced to death for “anti-Soviet work” and for “organizing events to cause famine in the country” (The case of Nikolai Vavilov). He died in 1943 in a Saratov prison (Pringle, 2009, p. 174). All of this had to be mentioned in our research for the sake of understanding that the state of research on the religious buildings of the Trypillian proto-civilization in the first 50 years after the discovery of the Kyrylivska site in Kyiv city, to put it mildly, left much to be desired.

There are references to the fact that during the German occupation of the Soviet Union during World War II, the sacred Trypillian heritage was studied by specialists in German archeology. It is known that in 1942 German army officer K. Raddatz discovered a Trypillian settlement near the Yushchenko Hospital (Vinnytsia city, Ukraine) (Map of sights). For the Germans, archaeology was so important that they allocated the necessary funds for excavations, despite the fierce war that was going on the eastern front. This was due to the fact that, according to some hypotheses of the time, Ukraine was a place of formation of the Proto-Aryan culture (In Ukraine, 2013)

or a place where Indo-Germanic tribes invaded from Northwest Europe, bringing with them high forms of material monuments (Passek, 1949, p. 233).

After the end of the World War II in 1945, a joint expedition of the Institute of the History of Material Culture of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union, consisting of P. Yefymenko, M. Rudynskyi, and S. Bibikov, with the participation of the Institute of Archeology of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, conducted explorations in the Middle Dniester basin (Chernivtsi and Khmelnytskyi regions of Ukraine). On the right bank, the research was conducted mainly in the Kelmentsi district, between the villages of Grushky and Nahoriany (Bibikov, 1953, p. 11). A little later, the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union sent an expedition to the northern regions of Moldova led by T. Passek, which made a significant contribution to the study of Trypillian monuments in the Chernivtsi region (Shmanko, 2012, pp. 128-129).

In 1949, T. Passek's published a monograph "Periodization of Trypillian settlements (III-II millennia BC)" (Passek, 1949), which summarized the study of Trypillian culture monuments in the first half of the twentieth century and for which the researcher was awarded the Stalin Prize. This is the only case in the history of Soviet archeology when researchers of Trypillian culture were awarded a state prize. Archaeologist T. Passek was the first to try to generalize views on the origin of Trypillian culture, the historical fate of the tribes, and their connection with ancient ethnic groups (Passek, 1949, pp. 232-239). According to the researcher, the development of tribes and their formation on the territory of Podniprovia and Podnistrovia at that time was based on a combination of local pre-Trypillian early Neolithic cultures and tribes of the Eastern Mediterranean and Asia Minor (Passek, 1949, p. 238). In general, the Soviet archaeologist considered the Trypillian culture to be autochthonous, emerging on the basis of the development of tribes of the Early Neolithic agricultural culture of line-banded ceramics.

Research of the Religious Buildings of Cucuteni-Trypillia in the Second Half of the XX Century

In the 1960s, some rethinking of Trypillian culture took place: the issues of origin were revised, chronology and periodization were clarified, and the results of research on the economy, social structure, demography, and ideological ideas of the population were highlighted (Chernyakov, 1993, p. 7). If until then archaeologists were mainly engaged in the accumulation of the material base, then spiritual culture and its historical interpretation remained under ideological pressure. In the 1960s, archaeologist V. Danylenko first proposed a conceptual approach to archaeological culture as a historical phenomenon and addressed the ethnocultural aspect of the Trypillia community (Danylenko, 1969, pp. 158, 170). The researcher noted that the formation and development of Trypillia was associated with the emergence of a number of "local ethno-cultural trends" and was a complex process (Trypillia culture, 2007, pp. 20-21).

In 1964, by means of aerial photography, military topographer K. Shyshkin managed to discover large circular Trypillian settlements ranging from 70-100 to 450 hectares (Mytsik, 2006, p. 16).

During the early second half of the XX century, studies of Trypillian culture were conducted by V. Zbenovych, M. Shmahlii, S. Ryzhov, V. Dudkin, T. Movsha, T. Popova, and others. In publications of research results, some attention is paid to spiritual culture (Movsha, 1980, p. 307; Shmaglii, et al., 1979, p. 425; Shmaglii, et al., 1985, pp. 42-52). At the same time, a number of generalizing monographs devoted to Trypillian culture

have been published (Zbenovych, 1989, pp. 108-123; Passek, 1961, pp. 5-203; Chernysh, 1982, pp. 171-175), which to a greater or lesser extent present various aspects of Trypillian life, including the sacred one.

A significant accumulation of evidence on Trypillian religious buildings began to gain momentum in the 70s of the past century. In these years, the initial design of the paradigm of Trypillian religious buildings took place. For example, Ukrainian archaeologist T. Movsha first collected evidence of sanctuaries of the Trypillian period in the 70s (Movsha, 1971, pp. 201-205), but at the time it did not seem to be sufficiently substantiated evidence. A more significant proof of the existence of religious buildings among the Trypillians was the discovery of a sanctuary at the Trypillian settlement of Konovka in the Chernivtsi region. Its parameters (6 x 19 m) immediately stood out among ordinary dwellings. The building was oriented along the world's East-West axis with a certain deviation. The position of the building was established on the basis of magnetic survey (Shmaglii, et al., 1985, pp. 42-52). The sanctuary was divided into two separate rooms. At the zero mark, four clay altars with religious objects were found. There were no heating devices in the room, such as stoves, which is the basis for interpreting this building as a sanctuary (Videiko, 2015, pp. 226-227).

At the same time, similar factual accumulation and excavations took place in the region of the Cucuteni-Trypillian cultural complex. Buildings that can be identified as sanctuaries were covered in the researches of K-M. Lazarovych and H. Lazarovych. (Lazarovici, 2009, pp. 65-76). Almost all of them belong to the period of 5000-4200 BC and represent sacred complexes with signs of cultic actions related to the cult of fertility, natural rebirth, and vegetation.

In 1973, it was reported that the Cucuteni-Trypillia sanctuary was opened near the village of Heleiesht in the county of Nămțu in Romania. The community's sanctuary was located in the very center of the settlement (Religion and ritual).

In 1981, during archaeological excavations in the Romanian village of Poduri in Băneasa county, the so-called "Cathedral of the Goddesses" was discovered—a set of sacred objects in the ritual complex of the Cucuteni-Trypillian culture, which included images of the Goddesses, each of whom had her own "throne" made in the form of rook horns. All the sacred objects were placed in a large pythos decorated with meandering patterns (Facets of the past, 2013, pp. 548-559). 15 years after the opening in the village of Poduri, another sanctuary of Cucuteni-Trypillia with a set of sacred objects was discovered in the district of Iasi. There were Goddesses, horn-shaped thrones, perforated pottery with a set of clay chips, and unfinished spheres. The number of thrones corresponded to the number of Goddesses. This entire set was also stored in a decorated vessel. The two studied ritual complexes from the territory of Romania allowed scientists to assert that the Sabatynivka complex from the territory of Ukraine has similar functions. Such complexes are likely to be cosmogonic in nature and served as a calendar sanctuary (associated with the renewal of the calendar cycle) (Facets of the past, 2013, pp. 548-559). Romanian scholars support the thesis that the religious ideas of the Cucuteni-Trypillian complex were quite unitary and had a common origin, even though they were spread over large geographical areas (Facets of the past, 2013, p. 547).

Trypillian sanctuaries at the settlements of Soloncheny I (Movsha, 1955, p. 9), Stina (Makarevich, 1960-b, pp. 24, 28), Sabatynivka (Makarevich, 1960-a, p. 291), Shkarivka (Burdo, 2005, p. 70; Tsvek, 1993, pp. 74-90), and Oleksandrivka (Burdo & Videiko, 2007, p. 101) have also been discovered and studied. At the Polyvaniv Yar settlement, researchers have discovered a room whose interior details and contents indicate the existence of a cult

site (Popova, 1990, p. 66). In the Trypillian culture settlements of Klyshchiv, Kononovka, and Maidanetske, researchers have identified buildings that could have belonged to various forms of social and cultural centers during their functioning (Encyclopedia of Tripillian Civilization, 2004, p. 365).

Rapid Development in the Study of Sacred Construction of Ancient Farmers at the Beginning of the XXI Century

A real breakthrough in the study of sacred Trypillian buildings came with the development of the technological capabilities of magnetic archaeological surveying in the field. Since 2009, modern magnetic surveying has revealed a world of concentric circular plans around central squares, residential areas with a network of complex streets inside them, the remains of centralized pottery and metallurgical complexes, and hitherto unknown rectangular constructions of large size that were located in undeveloped parts of the settlement between the concentric ring corridors of giant settlements or in their very center. In the archaeological scientific world, such anomalies are called “mega-buildings” or “megastructures” (a term coined by archaeologists M. Videiko and J. Chapman), which are purely working archaeological terms. To date, Trypillian “mega-buildings” have been discovered in Nebelivka (Ukraine), Volodymyrivka (Ukraine), Dobrovody (Ukraine), Maidanetske (Ukraine), Talianky (Ukraine), Moshurov (Ukraine), Hlybochok (Ukraine), Veselyi Kut (Ukraine), Trostianchyk (Ukraine), Viitivtsi (Ukraine), Bilyi Kamin (Ukraine), Zabolotne (Ukraine), Ternivka (Ukraine), Petreny (Moldova), Stolnyceny (Moldova), Adyncata (Romania) (Hofmann et al., 2019, p. 12).



Figure 2. The location of the Cucuteni-Trypillian settlement of Trynca-La Șanț (Moldova) on the top of a promontory, the remains of the central structures of which are oriented to the eastern part of the horizon.

In Talianky, the largest proto-city of Neolithic Europe and the entire Cucuteni-Trypillian cultural complex, geomagnetic surveys revealed a circular structure in the very center of the settlement, which was previously attributed to temple buildings. The structure was surveyed in 2012 and is still awaiting excavation (Videiko, 2016). Now all these unique settlements are the focus of various international projects and grant research.

In 2012, a Trypillian building was discovered in the wake of magnetic surveys near the village of Nebelivka, Kirovohrad region (Ukraine), which became the largest in the area of the Cucuteni-Trypillian cultural complex (1,200m²) (Videiko & Burdo, 2015, p. 310). Scientists recognized the building as a temple (Videiko, 2015, pp. 231-233). In 2015, at the II Shanghai World Archaeological Congress, this discovery was included in the top ten in the world among others of the same profile (The Tripillia Mega-Sites Project, 2019). In 2019, researchers from Durham University, who were directly involved in the excavations of the “mega-building” and the Trypillian settlement of Nebelivka, published in the UK the research work “The Pilgrimage Model for Trypillia Mega-Sites: The case of Nebelivka, Ukraine” (Chapman & Gaydarska, 2019), which traces the parameters of the pilgrimage model to Nebelivka. In 2020, the monograph “Early Urbanism in Europe. The Trypillia Megasites of the Ukrainian Forest-Steppe” was published in Berlin, which vividly presented the Nebelivka “megastructure” at the international level (Early Urbanism in Europe, 2020).

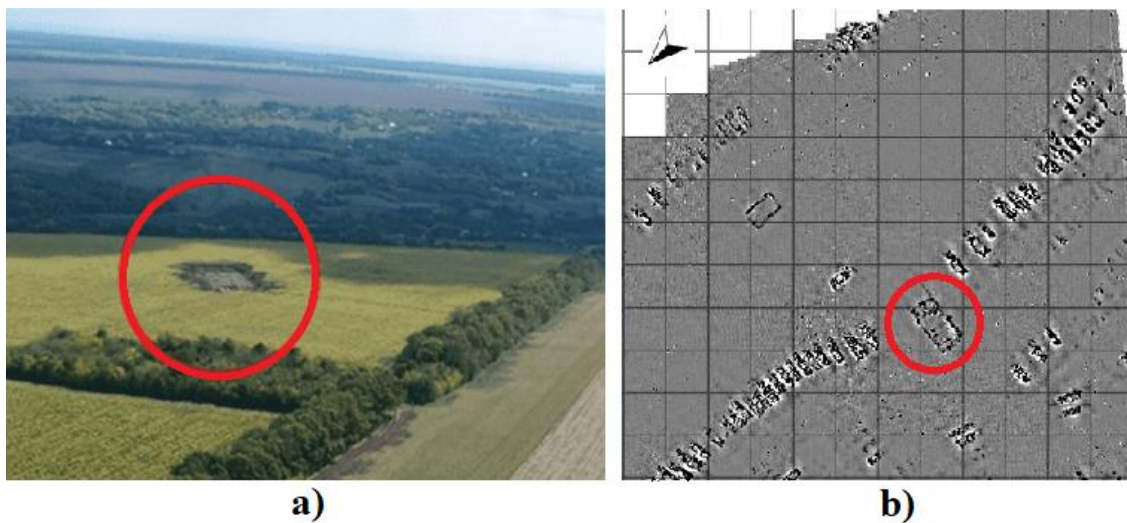


Figure 3. Trypillian (Nebelivka) temple on the highest point of the plateau close to the village of Nebelivka (Ukraine). View to the east. a) Top view of the excavations of the Nebelivka temple; b) Geomagnetic survey of a part of the settlement in the area of the Nebelivka temple.

In 2016, during field research of the Trypillian proto-city of Maidanetske, additional magnetic surveys were made on the ground, after which three temple buildings were discovered at once (Trypillian excavations, 2016). The discovery was reported by Ukrainian archaeologist M. Videiko. Along with a group of archaeologists, he excavated the Trypillian temple near the village of Kopachiv, Obukhiv district, Kyiv region (Obukhiv.info, 2017).

Thus, today in Ukraine at least five Trypillian “temple complexes” have been discovered, at least eight more sacred sites have been recorded, and the accumulation of materials is constantly continuing (Zavalii, 2020, pp. 70-71). Today, more than 100 sacred buildings are known in Ukraine, Moldova, and Romania, where the

Cucuteni-Trypillian cultural complex is widespread, and some of them have been studied (Monuments of faith). As of 2020, more than 110 “mega-buildings” have been recorded thanks to magnetic surveys (Videiko, 2020, pp. 230-238).

Consequences of the Discovery of Cucuteni-Trypillian Religious Buildings

Given all of the above, it is worth noting that the study of the religious beliefs of the Cucuteni-Trypillian culture is still poorly understood, not to mention the research related to the religious buildings and temples of the Trypillians. Special scientific works have not comprehensively addressed this issue and are still fragmentary. At the same time, certain aspects of this topic have at various times attracted the attention of scholars from various humanities. For decades, it was believed that the prehistoric Trypillian religion of the agricultural type was a set of magical practices or primitive forms of beliefs that carried some small pragmatic goals. It is believed that the Trypillians’ worldview was limited to belief in “meteorological” phenomena such as the sun, thunder, moon, and dawn (I believe what I see) and fear of these natural phenomena. For example, sociologist Daniel Bell describes the generalized phenomenon of the emergence of religion as follows: “Religion arose out of fears of nature-both the physical horrors of the environment and the dangers lurking in the inner psyche, which were released at night or summoned by special soothsayers” (Szerszynski, 2005, p. 10).

M. Gimbutas’ definition of the society of the Eneolithic period as the “Civilization of the Great Goddess” (Gimbutas, 2006), with the dominance of matriarchy, threw Trypillia back for many years to the religious system of worship of the “Many-Faced Goddess” (according to M. Gimbutas) with the corresponding social system of primitive, motive agriculture (Berezanska et al., 1997, pp. 337-338). According to M. Gimbutas, the core of the ancient European structure of society was a theocratic temple community, led by the chief priestess, her brother or uncle and the women’s council, which had the function of a governing body (Gimbutas, 2006, p. 8). Worship in the shrines was limited to the adoration of female statuettes of the pregnant Goddess, or the Goddess-bird, Goddess-serpent, Birthmother, Nursing mother, or Madonna. In addition to sanctuaries, worship took place in the courtyard, on special platforms or altars, near a bread oven, on mountain tops, near springs, in caves, etc. According to the researcher, the early agricultural civilization in Central and South-eastern Europe was destroyed as a result of several waves of invasion by patriarchal pastoral societies of “barrow cultures” (Videiko, 2015, p. 20).

The current state of research related to Trypillia and the “barrow cultures” proves a chronological discrepancy of at least 200 years between their existence (Gaydarska & Chapman, 2019, p. 5), and the views on the dominance of matriarchy in Ancient Europe are now rather historiographical in nature (Videiko, 2015, p. 21), which also gives rise to serious rethinking of religious culture. However, strangely enough, the very idea of the Trypillians’ “matriarchal tribal system” with the main cult of the Goddess still circulates in some scientific and native belief circles (for example, in H. Lozko’s research work “Religious beliefs of the Trypillians on the material of archaeological sources” (Chernyakov, 2003, pp. 223-230), the cultural and historical portal Heritage of the Ancestors “What was the religion of the Trypillians?” (What was the religion of the Trypillians, 2018). Nevertheless, it is worth recognizing that the cult of the Goddess does occupy a high position in the Trypillian religious complex, but as one of the main elements of an interconnected complex of fertility and vegetation cult, which occupied a prominent place in the agricultural society. After all, the Goddess does not give birth from

herself, and universal fertility always rests on two beginnings-male and female, paternal and maternal. We do not deny that in the ethno-religious complex of Trypillians there were sanctuaries dedicated exclusively to the cult of the Goddess (Goddess-bird, Birthmother, Nursing mother or Madonna), as well as purely male houses (a house that combined sacred, economic and “military” functions) (Chernovol & Radomsky, 2015, pp. 367-384), which were only some aspects of the religious tradition.

In connection with the study of the temple complexes and religious buildings of the Trypillian horizon, it becomes clear that the agricultural Eneolithic religious system cannot be limited to the supremacy of the Great Goddess, and the overwhelming number of female statuettes found in front of male ones in Trypillian settlements indicates only a significant fertility cult and lunar cult. Back in the 60s of the XX century, M. Makarevych noted: “Female statuettes in the monuments of Trypillian culture should be considered with other images, including images of a bird, a snake and a bull” (Makarevich, 1960-a, p. 290). The author also states: “The economic, agricultural and pastoral basis of the cult of the Trypillian tribes is especially sharply revealed in the cult of the bull, which was most closely intertwined with the cult of fertility” (Makarevich, 1960-a, p. 295). This is a way to understand the unity of the masculine and feminine in the sacred hierogamy of the Earthly and Celestial spheres. Our research leads us to the conclusion that in the Trypillian mytho-religious complex, the sacred Mother Earth and Father Sky were not supreme Gods, but were themselves placed within the framework of one universal concept, a kind of Cosmic Law (according to M. Chmykhov) according to the cycles, sacred signals and signs of which the Trypillian society operated. In modern terms, the Trypillian religion had a central narrative of a single sacralized Space, which, through the dualistic cosmology of the heavenly and earthly, united the entire sacred manifold of Nature in the agricultural religious system. It is in the celestial order that the sacred perfection is hidden, which can now be revealed and grasped thanks to the cultic buildings of ancient peoples.

Conclusion

The study of the sacred buildings of the Cucuteni-Trypillian culture was initially developed in the first half of the XX century and at that time was somewhat biased by the ideological foundations of Soviet archaeology. The current state of scientific research, which has moved to the international level, provides an objective picture and a new perspective on the sacred buildings of the ancient ethnic group.

The historiographical analysis of the material covered in this paper leads to the conclusion that science still does not have a coherent system of views on the religious culture of Trypillians and the ideological principles of their religious buildings. Often, they are frankly outdated and pass from one century to the next by inertia without reviewing new scientific achievements. There is a certain patchiness in research and a fear of revising the concepts of reputable scholars who drew their conclusions on materials from the mid-twentieth century. At the same time, a significant breakthrough in recent decades in the study of Trypillian settlements and sacred complexes, a large body of archaeological, methodological, and religious studies materials, allow us to better understand the genesis of sanctuaries and temples, and, at the same time, the etymology of their religious system of the agricultural type. This fills the existing scientific gap.

The discovery of the temples and sanctuaries of the ancient agricultural period also means revealing an understanding of their sacredness and our place in the world history of sacred ideas that existed among our distant

ancestors. In this scientific process, we learn not only about distant times, but also about ourselves, about the unknown history that shaped our system of perception and archetypes of the sacred.

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