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THE SPEAKING FRAGMENTS: WHAT TRYPILLIA SHERDS CAN TELL

The project participants «Early urbanism in Europe?: the case of the Trypillia mega-sites of the Ukraine» conducted an analysis of three large collections of pottery of the objects that were excavated in mega-site of Nebelivka.

Key words: Trypillia, mega-site, Nebelivka, pottery, classification, Mont Beuvray system.

Everyone agrees that pottery can provide archaeologists with much valuable information — the question is ‘what kind of information?’ In the AHRC-funded Project «Early urbanism in Europe?: the case of the Trypillia mega-sites of the Ukraine», we have shared the same problems with dealing with a large quantity of pottery as do our Ukrainian colleagues at each Trypillia excavation. In this primarily methodological article, we wish to share with our colleagues some data collection methods, analytical techniques and means of graphic presentations that have come to define how we have dealt with pottery from the Trypillia BII mega-site of Nebelivka, Novoarkhangel'sk District, Kirovograd Domain [Chapman et al., 2014; 2014a]. The graphics show examples of our exploratory data analysis and, in some cases, constitute preliminary results.

The Project has developed three underlying premises for our pottery studies:

1) a pottery assemblage cannot be understood without first developing a model of pottery deposition for the context in question;

2) although the form and decoration of ceramics changed through time, time was NOT the reason for these changes — there were social, functional, technological and ritual reasons for such changes, which happened in a temporal setting which was itself effectively neutral to change;

3) the best way of exploring these changes is the comparative method, using different classes of deposit to highlight differences.

The current Ukrainian understanding of site formation still owes much to the Hvojka tradition of how the founding father excavated the remains of burnt houses (Russian «*ploshchadki*»), despite the many methodological debates since the era of Passek; we supposed that new understandings may well emerge from our excavations. The issue of change through time cannot be explored in this article because the Project has not yet completed our AMS date-based modeling of the internal dwelling sequence at Nebelivka [Millard et al., 1994].

In this article, we compare three assemblages from different kinds of features — the largest Assembly House on the mega-site, a ‘normal dwelling house (House A9) and a pit in Sondazh 1.

POTTERY RECORDING SYSTEMS

The Ukrainian pottery specialist, Dr. E. Ovchinnikov, worked with us on the Nebelivka project and has already published an article on the assemblage from House A9 [Овчинников, 2012]. He has explained that his approach is an alternative to the «Ryzhov» Trypillia pottery system [Рыжов, 1990; Ryzhov, 2005; 2012], in which an initial division into fine painted wares, coarse wares and burnished wares formed the basis for a further sub-division into fabrics, based upon colour and temper. The next stage was the comparison of vessel shapes and decoration with wares and fabrics. These stages fit well with the system used by the Project, based upon the Mont Beuvray system (see below). The Project has made a serious attempt to utilize Ryzhov's vessel shape categories and decorative motif types but we have



Fig. 1. Interpretative geophysical plan of the Nebelivka mega-site (source: D. Hale): star — mega-structure; circle — House A9; triangle — Pit Sondazh 1

Table 1. Post-excavation stages of research

Date	Main task	Deliverable
July—August 2012	C. Ponroy trains E. Caswell and S. Arbeiter	Start of recording of 2012 mega-structure pottery
January and May 2013	Recording of pottery by E. Caswell, S. Arbeiter, B. Gaydarska & J. Chapman	Completion of recording 2012 mega-structure pots
July—August 2013	Recording of pottery by E. Caswell and S. Arbeiter	Completion of recording of 2013 Pit, Sondazh 1
September 2014	Completion of S. Arbeiter's Undergraduate Dissertation on decoration at Nebelivka	Analysis of mega-structure & Pit 1
December 2014	Recording of pottery from 2009 House A9, based upon the finds storage according to E. Ovchinnikov's classification	Analysis of House A9 pottery
February—August 2015	Typological and spatial analyses of three main assemblages by E. Caswell & J. Chapman	Production of this article

found problems with typological divisions into shapes and motifs, not least when sherd size is small. Perhaps the most serious issue with the Ryzhov system is that it pays no attention to medium-sized and small sherds which cannot be classified by type or decoration, often the dominant element on a settlement site. This focus on large, if not complete, vessels causes the loss of much valuable contextual information, which is vital in helping us to understand the way that pottery was deposited.

THE «MONT BEUVRAY» SYSTEM

The standardized and highly effective system for recording pottery at the Late Iron Age defended urban complex of Mont Beuvray has been the product of decades of pottery research [Paunier, 1994; Barral, Luginbühl, 1995]. Its aim is to produce a system that can be utilized by multiple international excavation teams in a comparable and consistent way. The basis is a chronological system of shape types, each of which has been dated with reference to previous excavation contexts. The combination of dated types found in each single context provides a date for that context. The Fabric series and the decoration types are overlain on the dated vessel shapes. Since the starting-point of the Mont Beuvray system — dated shape types — was missing from Trypillia pottery research, we had to omit this stage for the Nebelivka assemblage, instead using the fabric types based upon colour as the basic level of analysis.

In transposing this system to the Trypillia context, three key assumptions were made: (a) the basic unit of analysis is the sherd, with each sherd no matter how small having a «voice»; (b) the ideal recording method is the 3-dimensional recording of each sherd on a GIS platform; and (c) the same level of detail is recorded for each sherd, no matter how large or small. The basic variables recorded included Weight, Potpart, Fabric, Surface Colour (exterior and interior), Temper, Decorative Style and Motif (s), Wear traces and Burning. For rim and base sherds, the rim diameter and the proportion of rim surviving is recorded and the profile is drawn. Photographs were made of each decorated sherd and significant undecorated sherds. This rigorous data collection stage has required much training and a lot of post-excavation time, amounting to 250 person-days (Table 1).

Each of the three ceramic assemblages represented a different kind of feature — an Assembly House, a dwelling house and a large pit. These features were located on the East and South East side of the mega-site (Fig. 1). *The mega-structure* is by far the most complex of the three features and, measuring 60 m long × 22 m wide, currently constitutes the largest Assembly House known in the Trypillia world. Project opinions differ on the form and function of the mega-structure [Chapman, 2014b; Videiko, 2013]. While there



Fig. 3. Plan of excavated House A9 (photo: M. Videiko)



Fig. 4. Pottery scatter near base of Pit 1 (Sondazh 2) (photo: M. Nebbia)

were few sherds in the unburnt part of the structure — perhaps a yard or garden (Durham view) or a sacred precinct (Ukrainian view) — small numbers of sherds were deposited before the building of the mega-structure (Phase 1, or «pre-mega-structure»), while much larger numbers of sherds were deposited while the built part was in use (Phase 2), during its deliberate burning (Phase 3) and after the *ploshchadka* had been formed (Phase 4) (for pottery discard by Phase, see Fig. 2, see at color plate). *House A9* was completely excavated in 2009, following its location by geophysical prospection [Chapman, 2015]. The burnt daub scatter found at depths of 0,25—0,40 m was plough-damaged but preserved its rectangular shape of nearly 18 m in length and 4,5—5.6 m in width (Fig. 3). The remains of two open hearths were preserved. *Pit 1 (Sondazh 1)* (henceforth ‘the Pit’) represents a large Trypillia pit, with a surface area of c. 5 × 3.50 m and a depth of c. 3.20 m (unpub.) (Fig. 4). Despite the activities of *krotovina* (viz., animal burrows) to a depth of 1.5 m, we could recognize a succession of placed deposits of pottery, animal bones and figurines, often involving burning. Our initial expectation was that three pottery assemblages which were created in such different depositional conditions would have shown strong contrasts in many aspects of their basic characteristics.

EXPLORATORY DATA ANALYSIS

Basic data. Statistics on the weight of the three assemblages are presented below (Table 2); the total weight of the three assemblages came to just over 16 kg by weight.

The time-consuming recording of the weight of each sherd produced data to compare the overall assemblage, the main fabric groups and the mean sherd weight. It is interesting that the largest assemblage derived not from the Mega-structure or the House but from the Pit (Table 2). Each assemblage was dominated by fine, painted wares (over 90%), with the highest proportion of painted wares coming from the House (Table 2). The mean sherd weight showed not only that heavier sherds were placed in the Mega-structure but that more large, decorated sherds were deposited than in the House or the Pit (Fig. 5). We suggest that this emphasis on decorated sherds helped to create the identity of the Mega-structure as a place for such important fragments. Nonetheless, the cumulative frequencies of the three assemblages showed basic similarities in mode of deposition (Fig. 6). Since the Project has not managed to complete re-fitting experiments for all three assemblages, we cannot be sure of the proportions of each vessel deposited in their final contexts. However, it seems probable that fragments of many vessels were placed in final contexts, with other parts of the same vessel placed elsewhere. This would link the final contexts of several houses or

pits with one another, following the enchainment principle [Chapman, 2000].

Colour. The next stage in Ovchinnikov's [ОВЧИННИКОВ, 2012] analysis was the definition of fabric groups. We have developed a systematic approach to coding each sherd for its surface colour — both exterior and interior — based upon a set of 11 colours (Fig. 7). Although there was an overall similarity in the colour preferences of each assemblage, with Colours 3 more frequent than Colours 2 and 4, House A9 showed very different fabric preferences from the Pit and the Mega-structure. In House A9, there was a greater diversity of colours when related to shape types than in the other groups; we conclude that potters probably used different clays in their contributions to the destruction contexts of House A9 (viz., its death assemblage: [Kruts, 2003]) (Fig. 8).

Potparts. The coding of each sherd for the potpart — rims, body sherds, handles / lugs and bases — produced data on the way that vessels were fragmented prior to their deposition. Interestingly, the pie-charts showed similar breakdown in each assemblage (Fig. 10). This confirms our observation that not only complete or reconstructable vessels were placed in burnt houses

Table 2. Sherd weight, g, by fabric, % in brackets, for the three ceramic assemblages; g, %

Wares / Objects	House A9	The pit	Mega-structure	All
Fine Wares	3417, 95	6001, 90	5625, 91	15043, 92
Coarse Wares	177, 5	654, 10	550, 9	1381, 8
Totals	3594, 22	6655, 40	6175, 38	16424, 100

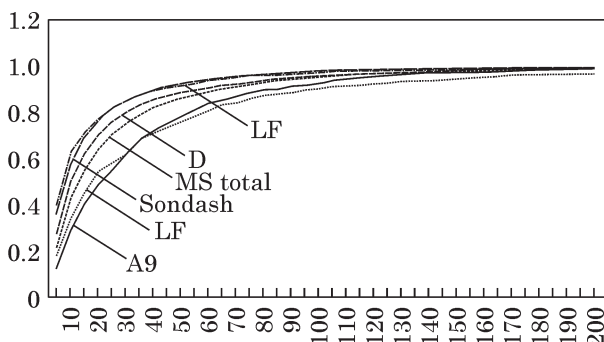


Fig. 6. Cumulative frequency graphs for sherd weights: Sondazh = Pit 1 (Sondazh 1); A9 = House A9; MS total = all sherds, Mega-structure; PD — Phase 4 (post-destruction), Mega-structure; D — Phase 3 (Destruction); LF — Phase 2 (Living Floor) (source: E. Caswell)

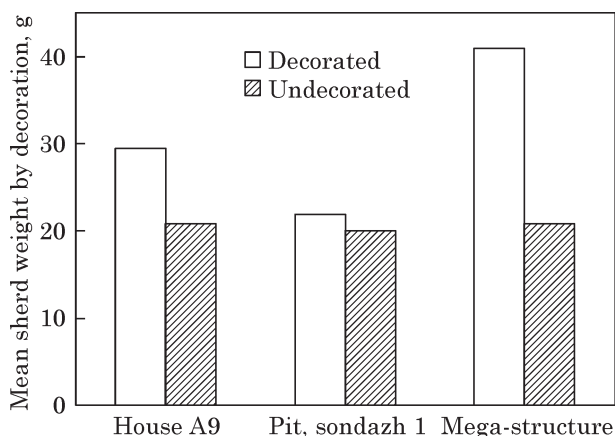


Fig. 5. Mean sherd weight by decoration, g (source: J. Chapman, E. Caswell)

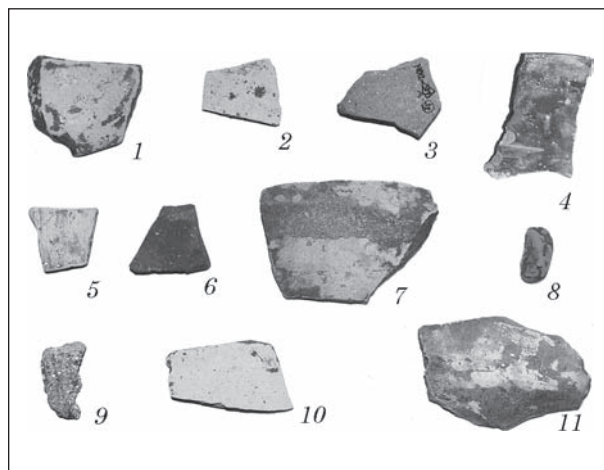


Fig. 7. Colour chart, exterior and interior surfaces of pottery (source: E. Caswell, S. Arbeiter)

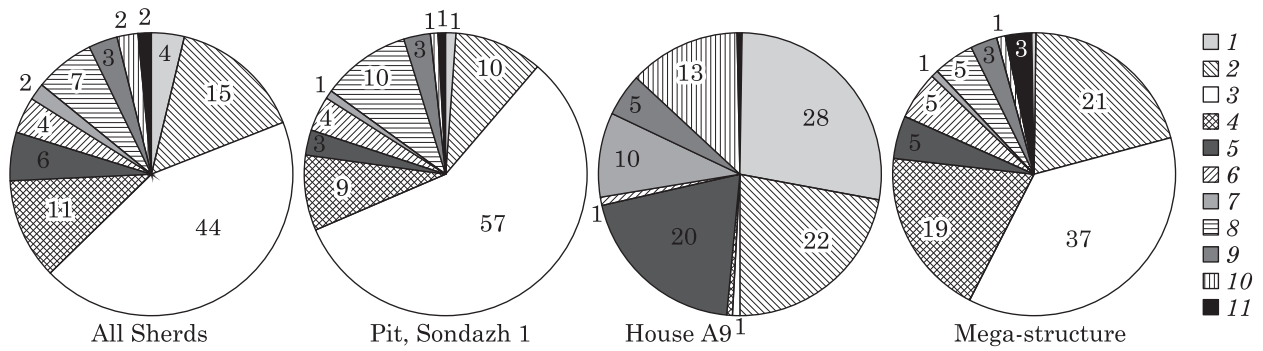


Fig. 8. Surface colour by assemblage, % (source: J. Chapman, E. Caswell), according to Fig. 7

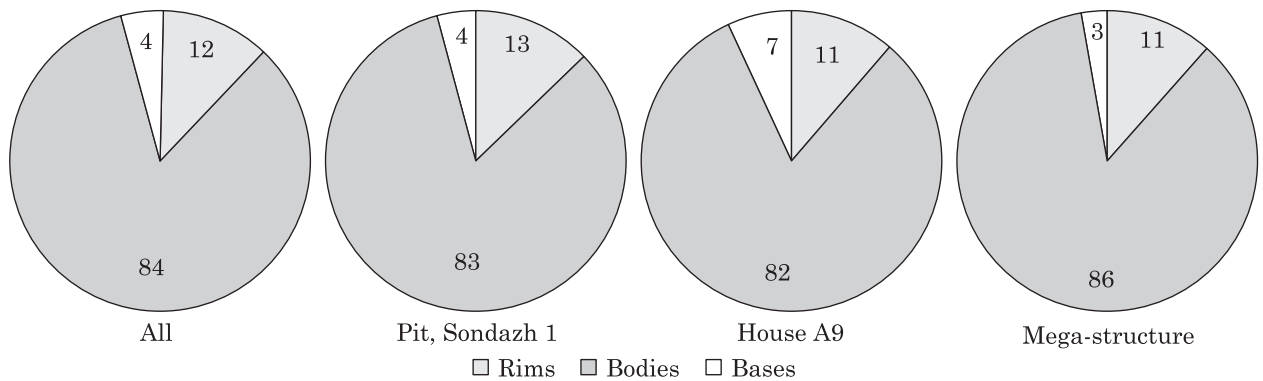


Fig. 9. Potparts by assemblage, % (source: J. Chapman, E. Caswell)

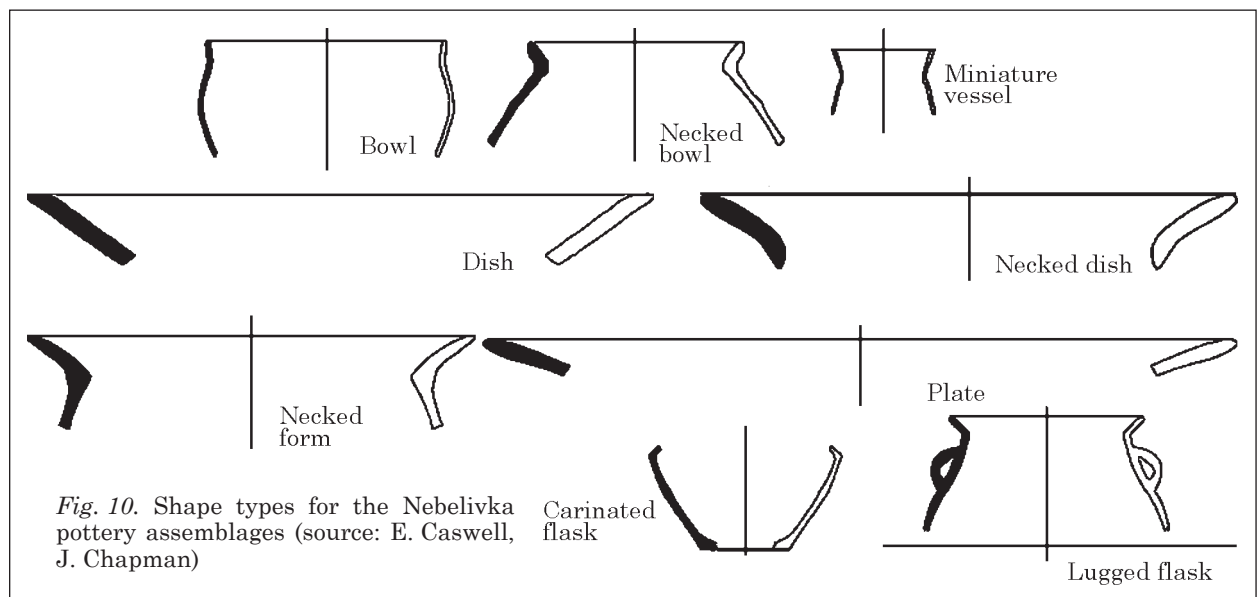


Fig. 10. Shape types for the Nebelivka pottery assemblages (source: E. Caswell, J. Chapman)

[Kruts, 2003] but also many fragments. Moreover, the same pattern of fragment discard was visible in burnt houses, Assembly Houses and the pits which were supposed to contain 'domestic rubbish' [Kruts, 2003]. However, no clear pattern was observed in a GIS-based plot of the spatial distribution of potparts in the Mega-structure.

Shape types. The Project continues to discuss the number of shape types in view of the divergence between Ovchinnikov's [Овчинников, 2012] typology and the results of the Durham team (Fig. 10). Drawing all the rim sherds allowed the definition

of overall size groupings for each assemblage and, by extension, for each shape type (e. g., for the Mega-structure, Fig. 11). Pie-charts of rim counts shows variations between the three assemblages, whether for detailed shape types or for shape types grouped into 'open', 'closed' and 'other' categories (Fig. 12). Although 'open' forms were preferred for each assemblage, the preference was stronger (2/3 of all rims) in the House. Such a depositional choice suggests the importance of marking the house-destruction by materialisation of collective consumption rather than storage.

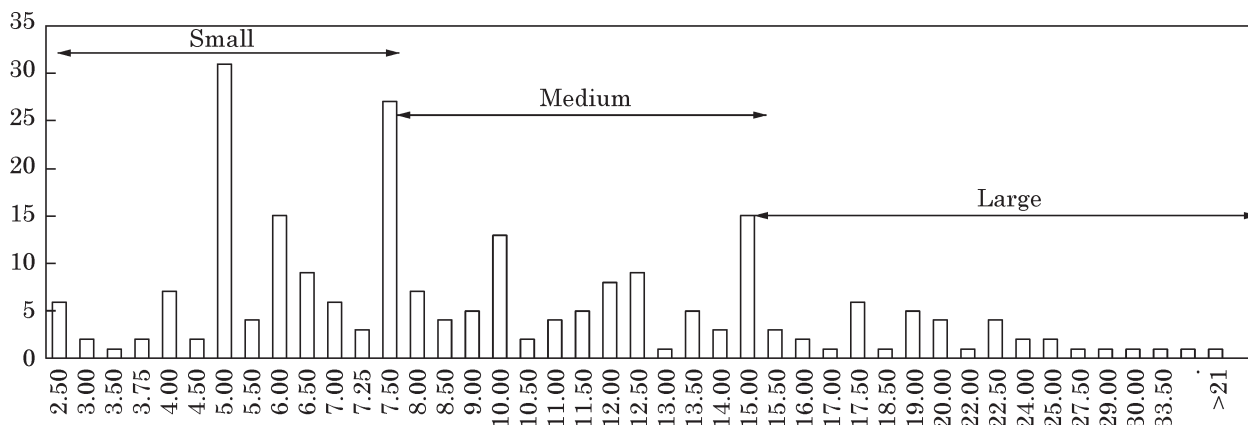


Fig. 11. Vessel sizes, Mega-structure (source: J. Chapman, E. Caswell)

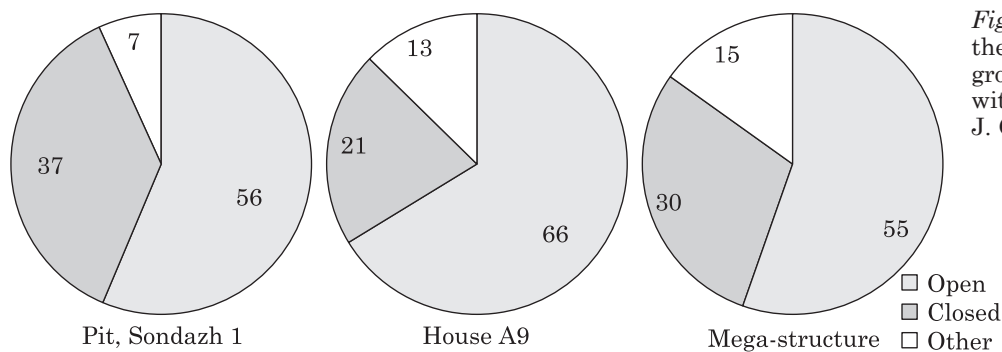


Fig. 12. Variations in the distribution of shape groupings without bases, % (source: J. Chapman, E. Caswell)

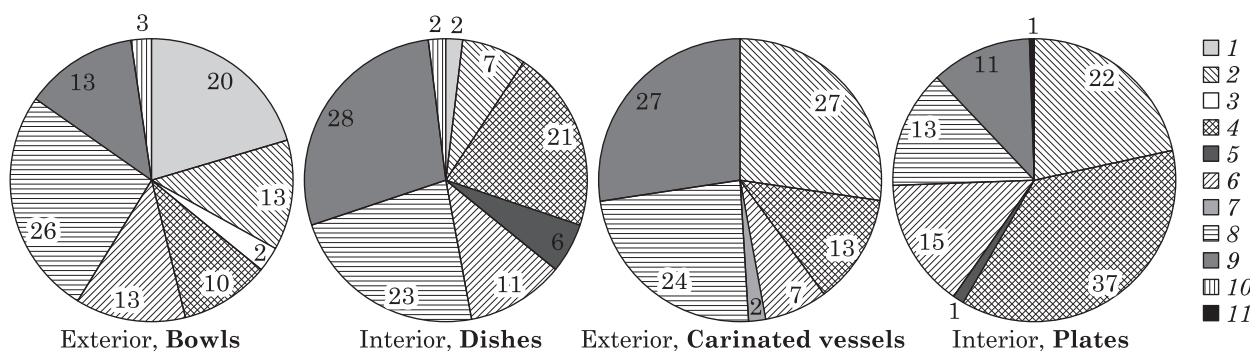


Fig. 13. Shape groupings vs. surface colour, House A9 assemblage, % (source: J. Chapman, E. Caswell), according to Fig. 7

Shape types and fabrics. The pottery recording developed within the adapted Mont Beuvray system generates many analyses of combinations of variables. One particularly interesting combination for the House assemblage concerns the shape types plotted against colour, using the interior colours of open forms (dishes and plates) and the exterior colours of more closed forms (bowls and carinated vessels) (Fig. 13). Each shape type reveals a difference colour preference for this very visible variable, with red exterior bowls, orange exterior carinated forms, grey interior dishes and red-brown interior plates the most frequent colour for both cooking vessels and fine wares. As with variations in shape choice, this suggests that different potters — perhaps not house-based? — are supplying the house with specific colour preferences for the range of their most common shapes.

Decorative styles and motif types. The decorative style and motif typology developed by Ryzhov [Рыжов, 1990; Ryzhov, 2012] has been used for the basis of Sophia Arbeiter’s study of the Mega-structure and the 2013 part of the Pit assemblage [Arbeiter, 2013]. Arbeiter constructed her own motif typology for the two assemblages, as exemplified here by the exterior decorative motifs of the impressed ware (Fig. 14) and the interior motifs of the painted wares (Fig. 15). The same system was used to classify the decorative styles and motifs for the House A9 pottery (see Table 1). While the vast majority of decorated vessels fell within the typical BII phase styles *sensu* Ryzhov and motifs, occasional grooved ware sherds typical of the supposedly earlier site of Volodymirivka have been found in both the fill of the Pit and the Mega-structure (Fig. 16).

Part	Type	Description	Example
1. rim	0	No decoration	
	1	Impressed triangles	
	2	Wavy rim	
	3	Impressed circles	
	4	Impressed «crescent»	
	4.1	Impressed «crescent», slant	
2. border	0	No decoration	
	1	Vertical lines	
	2	Chaotic lines	
	3	Row of impressions	
	4	Row of «diamonds»	
	5	Lug	
3. body	0	No decoration	
	1	Vertical lines	
	2	Chaotic lines	
	3	Row of small impressions	
	3.1	Small impressions and horizontal lines	
	4	Row of circles	

Fig. 14. External decorative motifs for Impressed Ware (source: S. Arbeiter, 2013)

Fig. 16. Grooved ware sherds in the style of Volodymyrivka, Nebelivka (photo: S. Arbeiter)



Part	Type	Description	Example
1. rim	0	No decoration	
	1	Horizontal line	
2. no border decoration			
2.1. main motif		«Comet» motif	
	0.1	«Comet» motif and «wave»	
		Straight line down	
3. border decoration			
3.1. border element	0	None	
	1	Vertical lines	
	2	«Sail» motif	
	3	Half circle	
	3	Half circle framed	
	3	Half circle framed and pendant lines	
	3.2. border line	1	Horizontal line
4. main motif	1	Half circle	
	1.1	Half circle framed	
	1.2	Half circle framed and pendant lines	
	2	Pendant lines «comet» motif	
	2.1	«Comet» motif and extra line	
	2.2.1	«Comet» motif and «wave»	
	2.2.2	«Comet» motif and «wave» with lines	

Fig. 15. Internal decorative motifs for Painted Ware (source: S. Arbeiter, 2013)

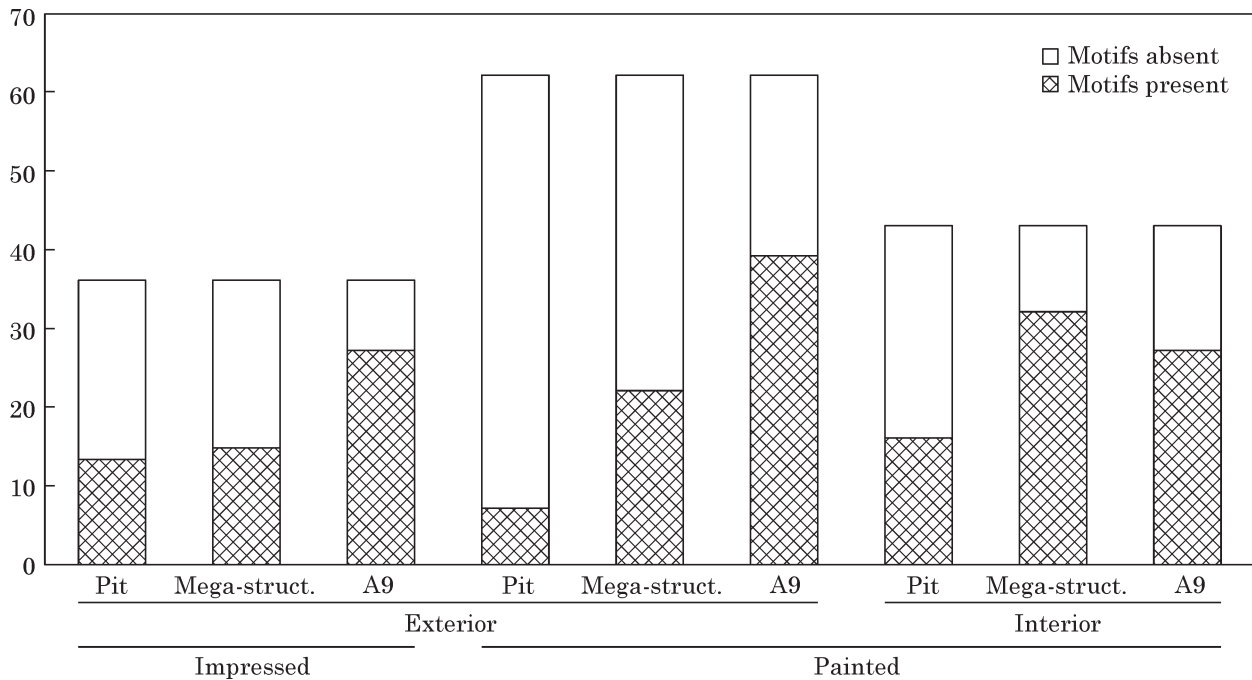


Fig. 17. Presence / absence of decorative motifs by decorative style (source: J. Chapman, E. Caswell)

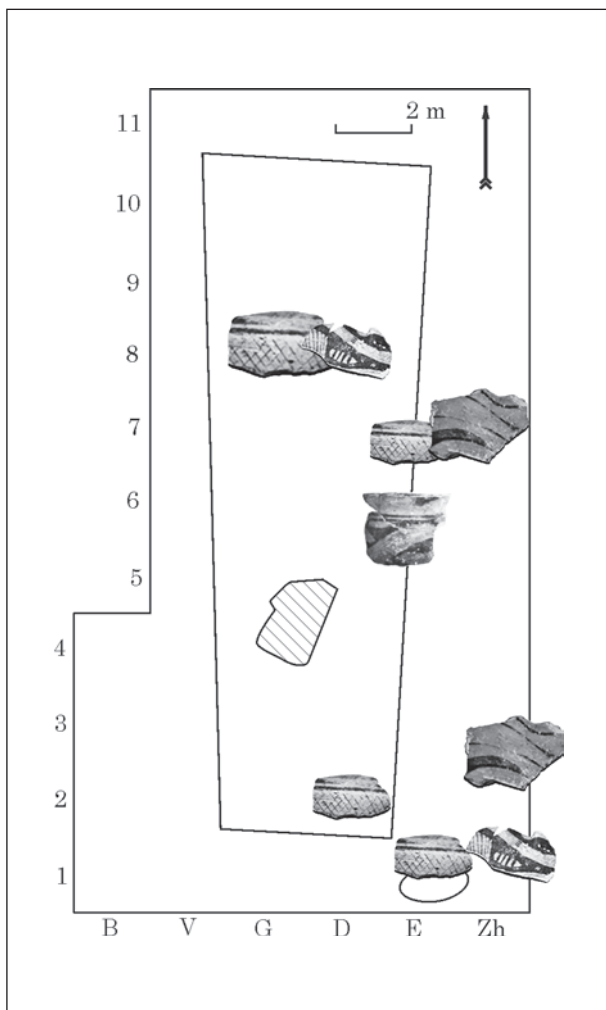


Fig. 18. Spatial clustering of decorative motifs, House A9 (source: J. Chapman, E. Caswell)

Two points that Arbeiter noticed [Arbeiter, 2013] and Chapman confirmed were the differences in the proportions of decorative motifs used in each assemblage and the variations in the motifs selected for deposition. The House assemblage revealed far more decorative motifs than were found in the mega-structure and in Pit 1, especially for Coarse ware motifs and Exterior Painted decoration, in contrast to the greater variety of Interior Painted motifs in the Mega-structure assemblage (Fig. 17). It is interesting that the lowest proportion of all available motifs was selected for deposition in the Pit. A more complex statistic showed that each assemblage selected different combinations of decorative motifs for deposition, presumably as a form of place-based identity.

Spatial analysis of decorative motifs. A spatial analysis of decorative motifs in House A9 showed the clustering of decorative motifs in four different zones inside the house (Fig. 18) without any indication of the concentration of vessel forms. This patterning was perhaps the products of different potters but it is perhaps more likely to represent a special kind of depositional association for household members with different parts of this intimate internal space.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Project pottery team found that the adapted «Mont Beuvray» system worked well and was broadly compatible with both the «Ryzhov» and the «Ovchinnikov» systems. The three assemblages studied in this way showed clear similarities in terms of the cumulative frequencies of sherd sizes, their breakdown of Potparts, their ratios of Fine:

Coarse wares and in their tendency to discard larger sherds which were decorated. However, there were also many differences between the three assemblages. There was a preferential discard of larger sherds in the Mega-structure in comparison with Pit 1 and House A9. Although there was an overall similarity in the colour preferences of each assemblage, with Colours 3 more frequent than Colours 2 and 4, the three assemblages comprised contrasting colour combinations; the House A9 assemblage in particular stood out from the others, suggesting that different potters were responsible for the three assemblages. Another difference was in forms: House A9 had a lot more Plates and Bowls than Pit 1 and the mega-structure, with the preference for more open shapes suggesting deposition marking more collective consumption. Moreover, there was much greater overall variability in shape and decoration in House A9, despite it being the smallest assemblage, with the probability of the discard there of feasting pottery. The House's wider range of motifs focused on Coarse ware motifs and Exterior Painted decoration. This could be contrasted with the greater variety of Interior Painted motifs in the Mega-structure assemblage. A spatial analysis of decorative motifs in House A9 showed the clustering of decorative motifs — perhaps showing discard by specific household members.

While there is a long way to go before the Project can claim that it has explained the variability in the discard of pottery at the Nebelivka mega-site, it is to be doubted that the sorts of questions that we can now raise could have been posed in the course of a traditional Ryzhov-style classification. We suggest that the combination of fabric analysis, traditional typological studies and spatial analysis provides a powerful tool for the definition of new questions which can help us all understand how and why pottery was discarded in such great quantities on Trypillia mega-sites.

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ПРО ЩО МОЖУТЬ РОЗКАЗАТИ ФРАГМЕНТИ ТРИПІЛЬСЬКОЇ КЕРАМІКИ

Поєднання даних аналізу матеріалу (техніко-технічні характеристики), традиційних типологічних досліджень і просторового аналізу представляє потужний інструмент для постановки нових питань, відповіді на які можуть допомогти нам зрозуміти, як і чому керамічний посуд був залишений в таких великих кількостях на трипільських поселеннях.

За роки роботи проекту «Ранній урбанізм в Європі?: трипільські великі поселення України» (2009, 2012—2014 рр.) були накопичені великі колекції керамічного посуду. У статті порівнюються три комплекси з різних видів об'єктів, розкопаних на поселенні-гіганті Небелівка — найбільша громадська споруда (мега-структура), звичайний житловий будинок (площадка А9) і яма (зондаж 1).

Авторами була застосована адаптована система *Mont Beuvray*, поєднана з системами Рижова та Овчинникова, яка враховує максимальну кількість ознак. Додатково Софі Арбайтер побудувала власну типологію орнаментів для дуже фрагментованих виробів.

Кожен з трьох вивчених комплексів мав чітко виражені відмінності, що обумовлено, мабуть, тим, що їх виготовленням займалися різні групи гончарів. Переважання «відкритих» форм (миски, кратери) в житлі А9 може пояснюватися більшою часткою колективного споживання їжі, що цілком зрозуміло, враховуючи призначення споруди. Найбільша варіативність форм посудин і їх декору може вказувати на спільні прийоми їжі і, як наслідок, частий бій посуду. В окремих секторах споруди концентрувалися вироби з певними орнаментами. Вірогідно, це пов'язано з вибором характерних візерунків для конкретних членів родини, що проживала в будинку.

Ключові слова: Трипільля, мега-структура, Небелівка, кераміка, класифікація, система *Mont Beuvray*.

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О ЧЕМ МОГУТ РАССКАЗАТЬ ФРАГМЕНТЫ ТРИПОЛЬСКОЙ КЕРАМИКИ

Сочетание данных анализа материала (технико-технические характеристики), традиционных типологических исследований и пространственного анализа представляет мощный инструмент для постановки новых вопросов, ответы на которые могут помочь нам понять, как и почему керамическая посуда была оставлена в таких больших количествах на трипольских поселениях.

За годы работы проекта «Ранний урбанізм в Европе?: трипольские крупные поселения Украины» (2009, 2012—2014 гг.) были накоплены крупные коллекции керамической посуды. В статье сравниваются три комплекса из разных видов объектов, раскопанных на поселении-гиганте Небелёвка — крупнейшая общественная постройка (мега-структура), обычный жилой дом (площадка А9) и яма (зондаж 1).

Была применена адаптированная система *Mont Beuvray*, совмещенная с системами Рижова и Овчинникова, учитывающая максимальное количество признаков. Дополнительно Софи Арбайтер построила собственную типологию орнаментов для сильно фрагментированных изделий.

Каждый из трех изученных комплексов имел четко выраженные отличия, что обусловлено, по-видимому, тем, что их изготовлением занимались разные группы гончаров. Преобладание «открытых» форм (миски, кратеры) в жилище А9 может объясняться большей долей коллективного потребления пищи, что вполне понятно, учитывая предназначение постройки. Наибольшая вариативность форм сосудов и их декора может указывать на совместные приемы пищи и, как следствие, частый бой посуды. В отдельных секторах постройки концентрировались изделия с определенными орнаментами. Возможно, это было связано с отбором характерных узоров для конкретных членов семьи, проживающей в доме.

Ключевые слова: Триполье, мега-структура, Небелёвка, керамика, классификация, система *Mont Beuvray*.

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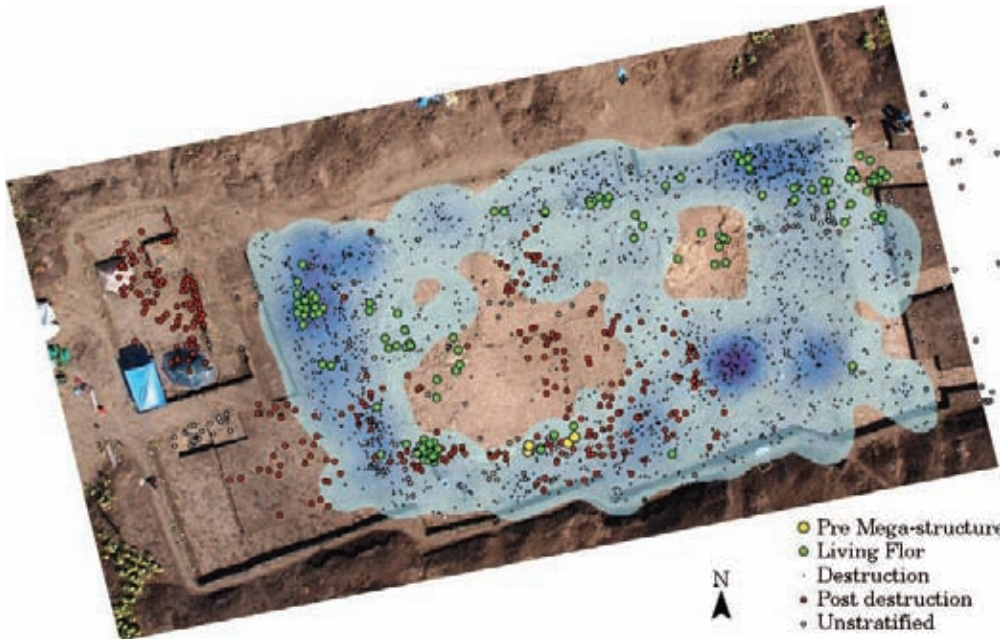


Fig. 2. Pottery discard by Phase, Mega-structure, Nebelivka (source: E. Caswell)

До статті
Н.В. Хамайко
 КАМ'ЯНІ ГРАЛЬНІ ФІГУРКИ
 З ШЕСТОВИЦЬКОГО ГОРОДИЩА



Рис. 1. Кам'яний пішак з шестовицького городища



Рис. 2. Кам'яний антропоморфний король з шестовицького городища

К статті
В.В. Крутилова, А.В. Буйських
 НАХОДКА РАННЕЙ МОНЕТЫ КИЗИКА В ОЛЬВИИ



Кизикин архаического времени из Ольвии

До статті
К.М. Капустіна, О.Ю. Журухіної
 СКЛЯНІ ВИРОБИ ГОРОДСЬКА
 (за матеріалами розкопок 1940—1950 рр.)

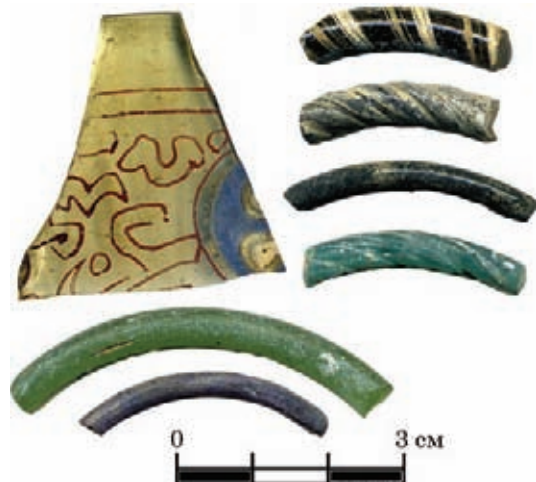


Рис. 1. Скляні вироби з Малого Городського городища