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ANDRII FYLYPCHUK (1989-2023) IN MEMORIAM



In the late 1960s, psychologist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross identified five stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and finally acceptance. Everything seems OK, but it is impossible to get used to some losses and to forget them – unacceptable, no matter how hard time tries to dull the pain and memory of them. Among such unacceptable losses is the death, in the terrible war of Russia against Ukraine, of Andrii Fylypchuk. He was such an incredibly erudite and bright personality, persistent and determined, a talented archaeologist, researcher and medievalist, and a brave volunteer of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

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The field of scientific interests of the young but experienced researcher was archaeology and the early history of the Slavs, the fortifications of the hillforts of the Raikovets culture in the Ukrainian Sub-Carpathian region, and the antiquities of the Plisnesk archaeological complex. The researcher wrote more than 150 scientific and popular science publications dedicated to these topics, including six monographs. With the death of Andrii Fylypchuk, not only did his family and friends suffer a painful loss, but so also did archaeological science. His untimely death deprived the Ukrainian State as a whole of a sincere patriot, which he remained until his last breath, defending its sovereignty in Slobozhanshyna – more than 1,250 km from his home, where a beloved wife and a son waited for him.

Andrii Fylypchuk was born on September 25, 1989, in the village of Khyshyevychi, Lviv region, in the family of a famous Slavist-archaeologist, PhD in Archaeology, later director of the Institute of Archaeology of the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Mykhailo Fylypchuk and Maria Fylypchuk. From early childhood, he was immersed in the world of archaeology and history; with incredible interest he listened to his father's fascinating stories about the ancient past, and with each subsequent book from the large home library that he read, he became more confident in the choice of his future profession. The young man visited archaeological excavations for the first time at the age of eleven, where during the research of the ancient city-state of Olbia (from the Ancient Greek Ὀλβία – happy) he learned true happiness – to be an archaeologist. Andrii repeatedly participated in his father's expeditions, and since 2003 he had been a permanent participant in the Plisnesk archaeological expedition. Shortly before his tragic death, he noted that two-thirds of his life was connected with Plisnesk.

After graduating from Koropuzh Secondary School, in 2006, without any hesitation, Andrii Fylypchuk entered the Faculty of History of the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, from which he eventually graduated with honours, obtaining a master's degree in archaeology. In the doctoral course, at the same university, he worked from 2011 to 2014 on the dissertation “Археологічні пам'ятки празько-корчацької культури в басейнах рік Прут та Дністер” [Archaeological sites of the Prague-Korchak culture in the basins of the Prut and Dniester rivers], supervised by Dr Natalia Bilas).

The result of these studies was the monograph “Склавини V-VII ст. на Дністрі і Пруті”. [The Sclaveni of the V-II centuries on the Dniester and Prut rivers]. Lviv, 2021. This work is devoted to the study of archaeological sites of the Prague culture, which the researcher identified with historical Sclaveni. It contains a theoretical and methodological analysis of the accumulated source base, covering the main categories of archaeological sites of the third quarter of the 1st millennium AD, discusses the debatable problems of the origin of the Prague culture, the emergence and functioning of early Slavic hillforts, certain aspects of the chronology and periodization of the archaeological material of the 5th-7th centuries. Andrii Fylypchuk concluded that the system of settlement in Dniester region in the early Slavic period, characteristics of the topography, and structure of the economy of

sites of the 2nd-5th and 5th-7th centuries demonstrates the lack of local foundations for the formation of Prague culture there. Therefore, the Slaveni most likely came to the region of the Dnister and Prut from the territory of Volyn' and Polissia. At the beginning of the 5th century in the region of the Upper and Middle Dnister region, they occupied territories that had previously been inhabited by the population of the Upper Dnister variant of the Chernyakhiv culture (the latter, most likely, represented a certain group of Antes of the Late Roman period). Supporting the thesis that the Prague culture developed into the Raykovets culture, the scholar divides the sites of the second half of the 1st millennium AD in the Prut and Dnister regions into “pre-hillfort” (5th-8th centuries) and “hillfort” periods of the development of Slavic culture. He also distinguishes two stages of the first period – the migration (early 5th – middle of 7th century) and stabilization processes (second half of 7th century – 8th century).

Andrii was very active. He worked a lot. During 2010-2011, he worked as a researcher at the PE “Center for Monument Preservation Research”, and in 2015 as an assistant at the Department of History of the Middle Ages and Byzantine Studies, as well as a researcher at the Research Department of the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv. He was a member of the Union of Archaeologists of Ukraine and the community organization “Pidhirtsi-Sholom”. In 2012, he conducted his own field survey on the territory of Lviv, Ternopil and



Ivano-Frankivsk regions. Erudite and eloquent, he was one of the best tour guides in Lviv's dungeons.

But, without a doubt, Andrii's main passion, like his father Mykhailo Fylypchuk's, was Plisnesk – a unique archaeological site of the early and late Middle Ages, located on the border of Sub-Carpathian and Volhynian land. Having not missed a single field season on the site since the age of thirteen, Andrii became an integral part of it. In 2015, he made great efforts to create The Historical and Cultural Reserve “Ancient Plisnesk”, where he worked as the deputy director for scientific work. Since then, he led separate expeditions there, and after the sudden death of Mykhailo Fylypchuk in 2016, he headed the Plisnesk archaeological expedition.

The figure of Mykhailo Fylypchuk, as a father, teacher and researcher of Plisnesk settlement, was decisive in Andrii's life. The first edition of the newly collection of papers on the reserve, of which Andrii became the editor-in-chief, was dedicated to his memory (“Пліснеські старожитності. Збірник наукових праць Адміністрації історико-культурного заповідника “Давній Пліснеськ” на пошану Михайла Андрійовича Филипчука [Plisnesk Antiquities. Collection of studies of Administration of Historical and Cultural Reserve “Ancient Plisnesk” in honour of Mykhailo Andriiovych Fylypchuk]”, Lviv: 2016). And in 2021, based on his father's archives, Andrii published the report “Збірку матеріалів археологічних досліджень Михайла Филипчука (1955-2016) [A collection of Mykhailo Fylypchuk's (1955-2016) archaeological research materials]. Lviv, 2021. In it he collected little-known, mostly unpublished materials of his archaeological research on the site.

As Andrii Fylypchuk noted, after his father's death, he “in a certain way was left alone with his ideas”. But the persistent researcher made a promise to himself that his father's work would not be lost in vain and began truly titanic work on “implementing his idea of ‘breaking Plisnesk into parts and reassembling it’ and, in simple words, summing it up, publishing it and interpreting it in line with of our vision, the historical development of Plisnesk, including in the context of the state-building processes of a thousand years ago”.

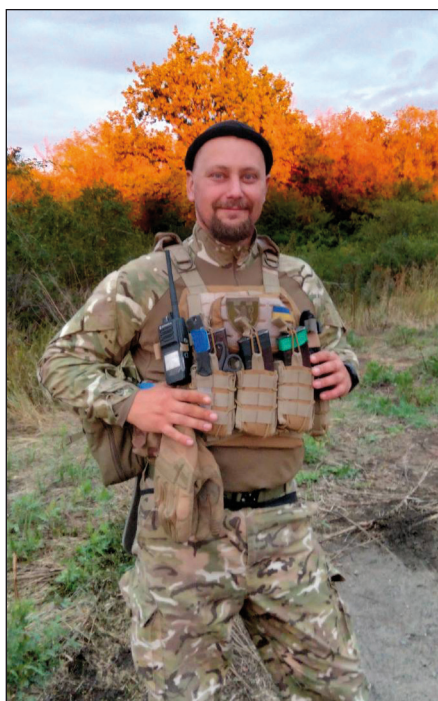
Pursuing the mentioned goal, the archaeologist worked frantically, starting work at 4 a.m! And running ahead, I will say that he succeeded, even faster than he himself hoped: “With God's help, with the help of my colleagues at work, on the expedition, with the help of my wife, we did it”. During six and a half years of unceasing work, Andrii Fylypchuk published five monographs dedicated to Plisnesk antiquities. Four of them were co-authored with Mykhailo Fylypchuk and his own wife, a researcher of cult sites of the 7th-13th centuries in the Sub-Carpathian region, Dr Halyna Fylypchuk.

The mentioned works are detailed reviews of certain basic scientific problems, the names of which eloquently correspond to the content of each of them: “Культовий центр VII-X ст. давнього Пліснеська (археологія та історія) [The cult center of the 7th-10th centuries of ancient Plisnesk (archaeology and history)]. Lviv, 2021; “Археологія курганного могильника давнього Пліснеська (дослідження 1940, 1946, 1949, 1980, 2007, 2015-

2017, 2020 pp. [Archaeology of the barrow cemetery of ancient Plisnesk (research 1940, 1946, 1949, 1980, 2007, 2015-2017, 2020)], Lviv, 2021; “Археологія християнських некрополів літописного Пліснеська [Archaeology of the Christian necropolises of the chronicle Plisnesk]”, Lviv, 2020; “Археологія фортифікацій давнього Пліснеська [Archaeology of the fortifications of ancient Plisnesk]”, Lviv, 2021.

The last monograph, “Давній Пліснеськ. Нариси [Ancient Plisnesk. Essays]”, Lviv, 2022, a printed copy of which Andrii Fylypchuk received while at the front, summed up this series of thorough publications. The book is devoted to summarizing the most important issues of the archaeology and history of the Plisnesk archaeological complex. The earliest antiquities of this site are represented by materials of the Trypillia and Vysotsk cultures. Of course, the sites of the medieval era are most vividly presented here: the cult pagan center of the 7th-10th centuries, the hillfort of the 9th-10th (Slavic) and 12th-13th centuries (Rus’) periods, grave sites of the 11th-13th centuries. The book is a kind of short summary, but at the same time, it is a continuation of the work started by the long-term leader of the Plisnesk archaeological expedition – Mykhailo Fylypchuk, and the large cohort of researchers who have ever worked at the site. With it, Andrii Fylypchuk summed up his own scientific career, a fact that he declared himself in an epilogue, indicating that he considered that he had fulfilled his duty to his father. It is symbolic that Andrii wrote it on December 19, on the birthday of his father...

However, archaeology is a science that is not chosen, it chooses the researcher





itself and does not let go until the last one. Thus, while already serving in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, where Andrii Fylypchuk volunteered immediately after the start of the full-scale Russian attack on Ukraine on February 24, 2022, archaeological finds continued to find him during shifts, repeatedly coming into view from the surface of the tired Ukrainian land. Comrades at the front later recalled that even while digging trenches, Andrii enthusiastically talked about the finds of ancient ceramics and their history.

In the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Andrii Fylypchuk served as part of the 103rd separate brigade of the Territorial Defense Forces. He fought in the hottest positions in Luhansk and Donetsk regions. At the front, he mastered the professions of a combat medic and a SPG-9 gunner. He was determined and courageous. During one of our last conversations, to my request to protect himself, he replied that in fact he was terribly worried not for himself, but for his family, because when he was so far from them and during the performance of combat missions he was without communication, he didn't know if they are safe... He loved his family above all else. He went to fight in order to protect them! At the same time, despite all the horrors of war and trials that he had to overcome every day, he always found a moment for self-improvement. At the front, he read a lot and even improved his English, amusingly pretending to have an accent.

The Hero died on February 2, 2023 in bloody battles on the outskirts of the city of Kremenina in the Luhansk Region at the age of 33, in the rank of senior soldier. He was buried in the Heroes of Ukraine Memorial Complex of the Lychakiv Cemetery on February 10.

On November 8, Andrii Fylypchuk was posthumously awarded the Order of Courage of III Class by the Decree of the President of Ukraine No 741/2023, for special courage shown in the defence of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and his selfless performance of military duty.

Apart from all the virtues that Andrii was endowed with, I will also forever remember him as a wonderful, bright person, a cheerful and sincere friend whom I had the honour of knowing since 2010. A talented colleague with whom I spent several archaeological seasons in Plisnesk. The person from whose hands I received initiation into archaeology, during my first expedition...

Rest in peace, my dear friend!

Thanks for all!

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