



**Goodbye Professor.
Uncompromising Evžen Neustupný**

Evžen Neustupný († January 14, 2021) throughout his life fulfilled the adjective of his surname (Neustupný = Pertinacious). He truly led his entire professional life with incredible determination, firmness of opinion and admirably systematic thinking. Perhaps that is why he influenced the development of world archaeology in such an exceptional way. His scientific contribution lies

not only in his deep experience and method of work, but above all in his intuition in recognizing and solving the key topics of archaeological research. A number of phenomena and relationships he discovered were further developed in his own research, but also in the work of a number of researchers worldwide, whom he inspired with his work. Professor Neustupný thus significantly influenced the development of archaeological research, both methodologically and, above all, theoretically.



Professor Evžen Neustupný in 2014 (photograph by: Jan Turek).

Already at the beginning of his career, he made a significant contribution to the synthetic conception of Czechoslovak archaeology, when together with his father Jiří Neustupný he introduced a completely new conception of prehistoric development in the *Outline of Czechoslovak Prehistory* (Neustupný & Neustupný 1960). Already this book, which was also published in the world edition of *Ancient Peoples and Places* (Neustupný & Neustupný 1961), indicated his departure from the cultural-historical paradigm, which was dominating Central European archaeology at the time. The formation of a completely new approach towards archaeological data and the interpretation of social relations can be seen in his study *Towards the Beginnings of Patriarchy in Central Europe* (Neustupný 1967). Neustupný here freed himself from the traditional cultural and historical schemes of Central European archaeology and used Marxist (unburdened by communist ideology) categories of reconstruction of social relations. He emphasized the importance of the introduction of ploughing and fallowing systems of agriculture and the use of secondary dairy products for the society of the European Eneolithic, a topic that was later addressed by archaeologists in Western Europe (eg Sherratt 1981).

According to Evžen Neustupný, in the 1960s and 1980s, progressive Czechoslovak archaeologists were moving towards something paradigmatically comparable to processualism, but the cultural and historical paradigm still completely prevailed (Neustupný 2017, 160). Neustupný inspired himself with processualism in many ways, but he himself did not directly lean either to the New Archaeology or later to post-processualism: he sought a way to his own paradigm.

With the invasion of Warsaw Pact troops in August 1968, hopes for the democratic development of Czechoslovak society were dashed and for Evžen Neustupný, as for many other scholars, difficult times of communist normalization came. Although Neustupný himself did not believe in the attempts of the reform communists to create socialism with a "human face", for him the brutal end of the Prague Spring was a great disillusion and a hard turning point in his life. Although the new reality was not a return to the rigid Stalinism of the 1950s, there could be no question of a plurality of political views and scientific debate.

Archaeologists from the Eastern bloc not only were not sent to conferences and internships in the West, but were advised by the Communist Party's political oversight to refrain from personal communication with Western researchers who came to the "peace camp"

(Neustupný 2017, 161–162). In addition to the restriction of movement, ideological and paradigmatic influence from the West was also prevented by actual censorship of postal correspondence (Turek 2018).

Neustupný, a world-renowned scientist at the time, received offers to develop his research freely in the USA, but decided not to follow his brother Jiří and did not emigrate. He himself said: "Someone had to stay here." It was a very lucky decision for Czech archaeology, but less so for himself. He spent the period of normalization in the 1970's and 1980's in constant uncertainty about keeping his position at the Prague Archaeological Institute. Neustupný was exposed here to considerable isolation and very limited research opportunities. However, he accepted the isolation as an opportunity to develop his ideas and, in fact, to build his own paradigm.

He dealt with methods of archaeological data processing, later including programming of his own analytical tools. He became world famous for the methodology of calibration and processing of radiocarbon data (Neustupný 1970). As Sir Collin Renfrew said in a laudation on the occasion of the Neuron Foundation Prize: "Neustupný taught us how to work with radiocarbon data."

Neustupný also dealt with the issues of demography of prehistoric populations (Neustupný 1983) and the reconstruction of nutrition in prehistory (Neustupný, Dvořák 1983), but above all he formed the theory of settlement areas (community areas) of prehistoric farmers (Neustupný 1986, 1991). This internationally recognized concept of the spatial division of the landscape according to the areas of activity has become the basis of many spatial analytical studies of the prehistoric landscape (Neustupný 1998).

Neustupný also contributed in a fundamental way towards the discussion on the meaning and content of the concept of prehistoric cultures (Neustupný 1976, Paradigm lost), migration processes (Neustupný 1982) and understanding of chronological-formal changes of artefacts within broader symbolic systems (*Significance of Facts*, Neustupný 1995 – concept of the *Eneolithic-Bronze Age ceramic complex*).

The end of communism and the advent of democracy in Central and Eastern Europe after 1989 completely changed the position of Evžen Neustupný in the Czech archaeological community. In 1990 he became the director of the Institute of Archaeology of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in Prague. In this position he fully manifested his organizational and conceptual abilities and visions. Thanks to Neustupný,

a network of regional institutes of archaeological heritage was established in the Czech Republic and, with its consent, the first non-governmental archaeological units started their active role in archaeological monuments protection.

Neustupný, as an important European thinker, influenced the methodology and thinking of a number of archaeologists, who often even subconsciously mastered his terminology and theory.

On behalf of Czechoslovakia, he participated in the establishment of the Malta Convention (Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe) in Valletta on January 16, 1992. He was also involved in the establishment of the European Association of Archaeologists (Ljubljana 1994). Neustupný himself had a relatively Eurosceptic view of the EU's political future, but he de facto greatly contributed to the cultural and intellectual reunification of Europe. His lifelong contribution is also reflected in international awards, such as the Europa Prize – the 1999 Annual Prehistoric Society Award or the 2014 Neuron Foundation Award for Contribution to World Science.

It would seem that this is more than enough for one human life. However, Neustupný continued to work to capitalize on his experiences and ideas, and so at a time when many are retiring, he opened another chapter of his life. In 1998, he founded the Department of Archaeology at the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen, which he headed until 2005 and turned into a top academic institution. As part of building his own school of archaeology, he wrote important theoretical and methodological monographs (Neustupný 2007: *Method of Archaeology*; in English: *Archaeological Method*, Neustupný 1993; and Neustupný 2010: *Theory of Archaeology*). Even later, as an emeritus, he professionally led the doctoral theses of many students and thus directly influenced a whole generation of young archaeologists.

Evžen Neustupný fundamentally influenced archaeological thinking and his paradigmatic legacy continues to shape the theory of archaeology. Our thanks go to him for that.

Honour his memory!

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Jan Turek*
Center for Theoretical Study
Charles University
Prague
E-mail: turekjan@hotmail.com

* Corresponding author.