

In Memoriam Stefan Karol Kozłowski (1938-2022) A Personal Obituary

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Prof. Dr. hab. Stefan Karol Kozłowski was an outstanding researcher. He was a professor of the old style and a teaching tradition that survived in some European humanities faculties until the 1970s and 1980s. He belonged to Poland's educational elite, which often had close links with "Western" research and, like Stefan, was Francophile in cultural orientation. Stefan had made the same effort to network in socialist countries, paving the way for many connections between Eastern and Western prehistoric research after 1989.

He was just as home in European prehistory as in Middle Eastern prehistory. Before he turned his attention mainly to Polish and Eastern European prehistory, he worked in the Middle East between 1979 and 1990 as an excavator for the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology of the University of Warsaw in Iraq, including at the important sites of M'lefaat and Nemrik 9. For almost two decades, his main activities were site evaluations, material analyses and syntheses on the lithic traditions of the Neolithic of the Fertile Crescent; numerous books and articles document this scientific legacy (Aurenche and Coqueugniot 2022).



Fig. 2 Stefan K. Kozłowski and late Peder Mortensen talking during the Basta Final Symposium in Berlin (2008). (Photo: H.G.K. Gebel)

This is a personal memory of Stefan and the period of our academic and private life together, in which we also had a very close engagement for more cooperation and exchange within the Near Eastern Neolithic chipped stone family (1992-1998).

Our cooperation was sometimes not easy. Stefan's commanding understanding of the Neolithic as a development of lithic facies made it difficult for me to emphasise the role of lithic industries in their general Neolithic socio-economic contexts and trajectories. However, his conservative professorial dominance was ultimately compensated by his ability to be amicable.

Stefan and I first met in February 1991 through an enquiry I had made about Nemrik 9. This was followed in November by his visit to Berlin, where the idea of a prominently attended workshop on PPN Chipped Lithics first came up; at this time, however, a workshop series still was out of focus (Gebel 2011).

Stefan pursued his ideas with passion, authority and eccentricity, but always with a neckerchief. And if his ideas were only tentatively accepted by students and colleagues, he could become quite imposing. Based on his thorough knowledge of the material, syntheses were his strength and – of course – followed his axioms. It was a characteristic of his scientific practice and collegiality to push for his lithically orientated syntheses along his basic ideas of the Neolithic, and seeking fellow campaigners for this: He was a master at mobilising and assembling colleagues and students around the mostly lithic research topics that captivated him throughout his life. Lithic perspectives always motivated and determined his few forays into social or theoretical archaeology.

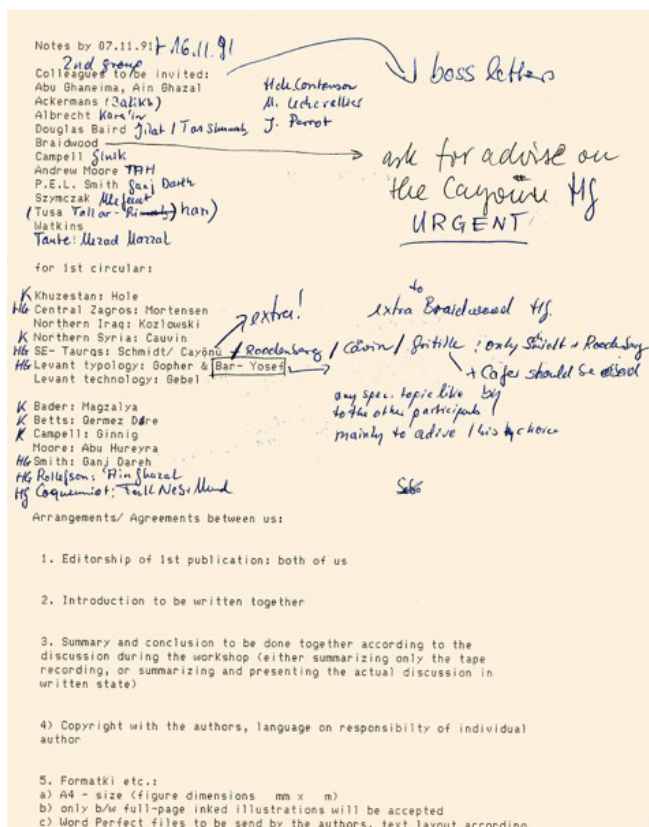


Fig. 1 One of the original planning documents of the 1st Workshop on PPN Lithic Industries in Berlin 1993.

Stefan's contributions to symposia, workshops and conferences were inspiring (e.g., his concept of the Agro-Standard in tool traditions of the alluvial lands) and provocative. He propagated his approaches and understandings with intensity and his very own type of decidedly synthetic disposition. Especially in the early years of the Neolithic Family formation, when co-organising the PPN Chipped Lithics Workshops in Berlin and Warsaw, my diplomatic investment was needed. When a colleague finally commented in 1998 that one should not spend one's time following Stefan's "19th-century Montelian attitude" and agendas, someone close to Stefan commented: "Bon courage pour la négociation - ou la guerre !!!????". I mention this because such research-historical side notes say a lot about the sociological situation and tensions in Neolithic chipped stone research in the 1990s.

Stefan's narrative depictions of Neolithic expansions are also unforgettable, for example, the one of Ahmad, who had made his way south from the Middle Euphrates teaching his core technology (at the Basta Symposium 2008, Freie Universität Berlin); Stefan was provocative and unflinching in his "scientific aphorisms", but it is also part of Stefan's legacy that the controversies, the provocation and his syntheses brought Neolithic research forward in many ways.

Stefan was never comfortable with Neo-Lithics or ex oriente, although both were an outcome of our joint efforts for the PPN Chipped Lithic Workshops and the cohesion of the Neolithic research community. Neo-Lithics and its concept needed to be more academic for him, and he never became a member of ex oriente.

After the joint work on the Berlin and Warsaw proceedings of the PPN Chipped Lithic Workshops 1 and 2 (Gebel and Kozłowski 1994; Kozłowski and Gebel 1996) was completed, our direct contacts (between 1998 and 2000) were limited to Stefan's and Elżbieta's overnight stops with us in Berlin-Steglitz. Despite, or perhaps because of, all the family-type contacts

between the Kozłowskis and the Gebels, he always had small work assignments for me.

Between 2000 and 2003, contact with Stefan dwindled, interrupted by a few cordial, mostly handwritten letters from him. It was also the time of our move from Berlin to Lindenberg and thus the end of his and Elżbieta's stopovers on their way to Lyon.

I do not want to miss Stefan's influence on me and my academic work: Everything from him shaped and guided me intensely in one direction or another. And for that, I remain forever grateful to him and honour his memory from the bottom of my heart.

For Stefan's academic obituary, I refer to the article by Olivier Aurenche and Éric Coqueugniot in *Paléorient* 48.2.

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Fig. 3 Stefan K. Kozłowski energetically explains something to Inge Demand Mortensen during a boat trip of the Basta Final Symposium in 2008 on Spree River, Berlin with Hans J. Nissen and late Ofer Bar-Yosef to his left. (Photo: H.G.K. Gebel)