Scientific fluency in multidisciplinary research - examples from archaeology

Highly valuable in scientific research, interdisciplinarity bridges disciplines in pursuit of new knowledge. Here, multidisciplinary work on several prehistoric settlement sites in the Central Balkan region would be used as an example of the employment of different methods of investigation. As such, in the field of the reconstruction of paleoenvironment and past landscapes used by prehistoric communities, different lines of evidence are necessary. These are intertwined in the pursuit of new knowledge, new data, but also new interpretations. Cross-disciplinary approach implies fieldwork, sampling, lab processing, analysing, and interpreting the results. It involves methods, approaches, and facilities used by soil scientists, organic chemistry specialists, and archaeologists.

Integration of hard and social sciences also creates new methodological frames of multidisciplinary work, and for these to be fruitful, sometimes a new language must be employed. Learning how to communicate and create meaningful interpretations sometimes requires more than the expertise in one of the fields. Being fluent in communicating with colleagues from different disciplines, especially coming from “hard” and “social” spectrum of science is often a necessary skill required, but the one hard to master, without an available language course.