

A Letter to Susan

INNA MATEICIUCOVÁ* & MAXIMILIAN WILDING**

Dear Susan,

Max and I would like to cordially wish you a Happy Birthday!

I am very glad to have had the possibility to make your acquaintance. I already had this wish while I was spending some time in Berlin with my friend Chiara de Cesari, who was really enthralled by your lectures at the Freie Universität at that time. In those days, I also met Reinhard in the corridors of the institute in Hüttenweg without having any idea that he is your colleague and partner.

I remember that I personally met you at a conference in Leiden many years later, finally. I immediately felt connected to you when I saw and heard you discussing the topics of papers. Our meeting was also attended by our dear friend Olivier Nieuwenhuys, who passed away this year, and by his wife Renske.



Susan at the conference in Leiden 2009. Photo: Dalibor Všíanský.

I truly appreciated that you agreed when I asked you to come and give lectures at the newly established study centre, Prehistoric Archaeology of the Near East (PANE) at the Masaryk University in Brno. The PANE students were really excited about your lectures. They said you explained everything in a very clear and natural way. I personally felt the same when I decided to attend your course on the Chalcolithic of the Near East. You then became our regular guest and a solid part of the PANE teaching staff. Soon after, Reinhard also joined you, and together with other colleagues from Germany, Italy, Netherlands, and the USA, you have helped with forming the personalities of our students. Max and I, like our students, have enjoyed your presence in Brno and we remember with pleasure our evening meals together at our home.

I also truly appreciated that you acted as a guarantor for my research stay in Berlin within the

* Center of Prehistoric Archaeology of the Near East, Department of Classical Studies, Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, Brno (Czech Republic)

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Humboldt-Scholarship and I'm so sorry that you witnessed the events which eventually resulted in the abolition of the PANE institute. In that critical moment, when it looked as if the PANE would be dissolved after ten years of existence, you, along with Reinhard and Arnulf Hausleiter, provided assistance to us by organising an international petition and sending, together with other colleagues, letters to the heads of the faculty and university.

Susan, I always admired you for your ability to find refreshed inner power and strength when circumstances in the research countries, time and again, thwarted your attempts to proceed with recently initiated or promising developing projects. I was sorry to see how you and Reinhard made every possible effort to help students and colleagues, despite encountering, in your turn, obstacles which hindered you from continuing these field archaeological projects. Nevertheless, you are contributing to research significantly, and your work will undoubtedly be followed, owing to a large extent to your trademark of expounding your novel ideas with high precision.

Dear Susan, in the past months we had no opportunity to contribute an article to your *Festschrift*. I hope nonetheless that this message can express our appreciation and affection.

All best wishes,

Inna and Max

Brno, 26/27 June 2020