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Interactive comment on “Native *Dreissena* freshwater mussels in the Balkans: in and out of ancient lakes” by T. Wilke et al.

Anonymous Referee #2

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This is a very well written and thorough analysis by the leading team investigating the biogeographical diversity of ancient Balkan lakes using phylogeographical and population genetic analyses. They effectively use *Dreissena* as a tool to explore a variety of questions and hypotheses. In the process, their work provides substantial evidence that most populations in the southwest Balkans belong to two native species: *D. presbensis* and *D. blanici*. Their confirmation of *D. polymorpha* in this region is also a significant contribution. The data in this manuscript also clarify the dates of signs of major demographic and spatial expansions of the dreissenid species in this region. Their broad database also lends credence to hypotheses they put forth such as, for example, that the ancestral *Dreissena* population in Lake Ohrid may be the source of today's *Dreissena* biodiversity in the area. In summary, this publication represents a very thorough and comprehensive investigation which will likely prove to be a mile-

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stone contribution to our understanding of faunal relationships, particularly among for
dreissenid species, within Balkan ancient lakes.

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