

The Baltic Sea southern coast and the interior. Selected problems

Artur Błazejewski

*This paper is dedicated to
Professor Mykolas Michelbertas*

In the studies on the Baltic Sea region in the Roman period a prominent role play works concerning contacts between the south Baltic coast and areas situated more to the south. Previous publications generally dealt with two main aspects of these contacts.

The first one was focused on the problem of relations of the Baltic coast with the south along the amber route. Of course, the researcher of outstanding merit was here Jerzy Wielowiejski, the author of many valuable publications whose findings are mostly still valid (1970; 1980). Their value lies primarily in discussing the nature of trade between ‘peoples of the north’ on the one hand, and Roman provinces, particularly the Danube ones, and Italia on the other hand. To the works of J. Wielowiejski publications of other authors also referred.

The other research trend concerns widely known issues of the Wielbark culture migration to the south-east, most likely identical to the Goths’ tribes migration. Here should be mentioned, naturally, works of Andrzej Kokowski (1999 a; 2007). The author very clearly and strongly expresses his views, especially in terms of the ethnicity of archaeological cultures of the Barbaricum. It seems, however, that the most valuable of them are those concerning sites in Masłomęcz and Gródek nad Bugiem, because they discuss relevant to the topic archaeological materials (1993; 1999 b).

To this trend belong, however, also a number of works of other archaeologists, and first of all of Ryszard Wołagiewicz. Amongst them the most important is probably the one which discuss the Wielbark culture pottery between the Baltic and the Black Sea (1993).

The most frequently, therefore, are discussed trade relations with the Empire and the migration of the Goths from the Baltic to the Black Sea. In the second

place, I believe, still remains the problem of the Langobardi migration from their original settlement area at the mouth of the Elbe River to its source and further, to the zone at the Danube Limes (Svoboda, 1964; Tejral, 1975). It is worth, however, in my opinion, to focus on other aspects of relations between the Baltic coast and the interior.

The first issue worth mentioning is, I think, the presence of the Wielbark culture in the middle and upper Odra River basin. These issues were pointed out by H. Machajewski in his very successful study (1979). Since its publication, however, a lot of new materials that require quoting appeared, and previous views need a recapitulation.

The presence of numerous sites of the Wielbark culture in Greater Poland, far to the south from the Noteć River, is a fact already clearly present in the literature (Machajewski, 1979; Godłowski, 1985, s. 87). It should be noticed, however, that while the south-east direction of the expansion of this culture is already well documented, there are no analyses concerning the west or south-west direction and this should be certainly perceived based on the archaeological sources.

Firstly, it should be noted the participation of the Wielbark culture elements in the formation of the so-called Luboszyce culture, first established by Grzegorz Domański (1979). According his opinion, objects of ‘Wielbark’ character (and the cultural influences from the Baltic coast in general) are typical especially for the second stage of the Luboszyce culture (Fig. 1; Domański, 1979, s. 212–213; 1981, s. 264; 1989). It was already many times mentioned, of course, but it should be strongly emphasized that it is visible from the phase I of this archaeological culture (Bohr, 2002, s. 145; Schuster, 2011, s. 149–151). It is evidenced by numerous materials recently acquired primarily from

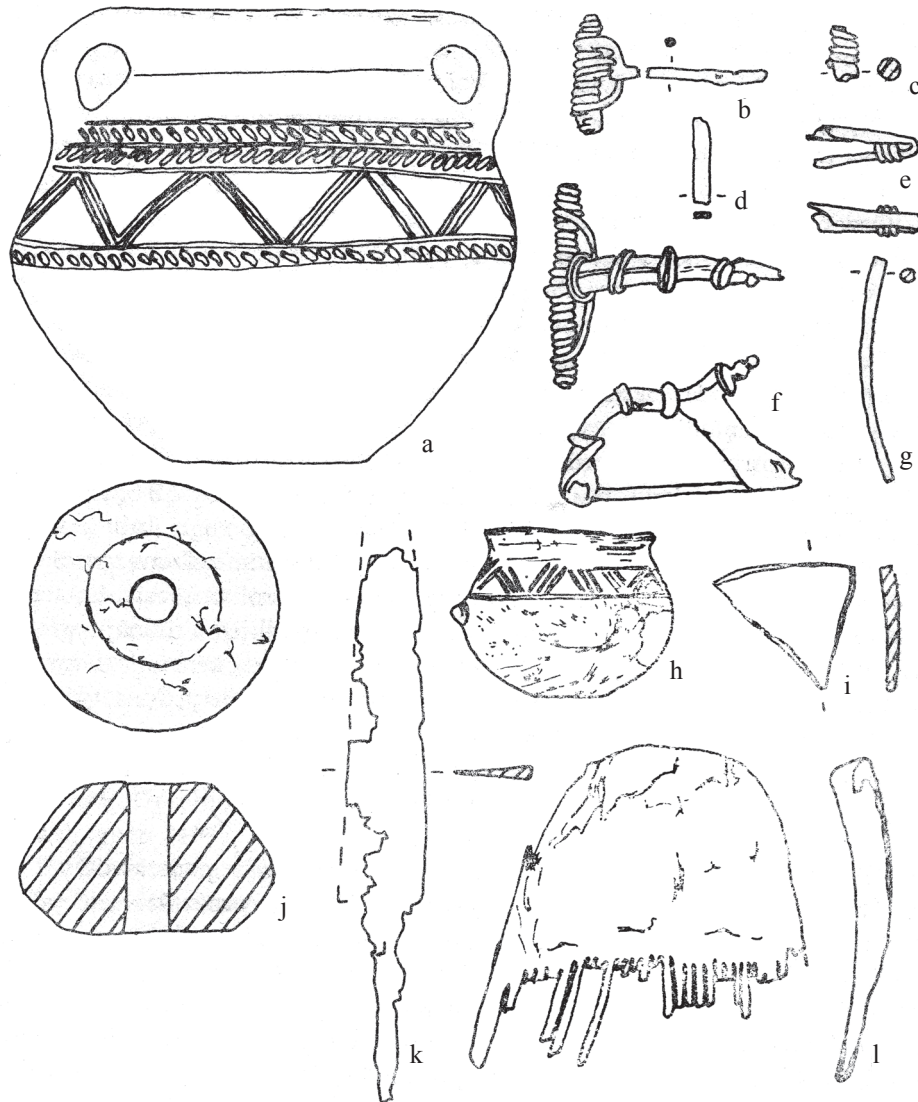


Fig. 1. Grabice, grave 83. 'Wielbark'-type pottery in the Luboszyce culture (after Domański, 1979).

1 pav. Grabice, kapas 83. Wielbarko tipo indai Luboszyčių kultūroje (pagal Domański, 1979)

the middle Odra River basin. It seems that a lot of light on this issue, among others, may shed a future study of a large burial ground of the Wielbark culture in Jordanowo (Wawrzyniak, 2000; 2002).

It should be recalled, however, that also from the southern area of Greater Poland archaeological sites where the Wielbark culture elements are clearly visible are known. It's about hand-made pottery finds (Fig. 2), for example the vessel from the grave 174 at the cemetery of Wymysłowo (Fig. 2:1; Jasnosz, 1952, s. 114–115, il. 153:1), the vessel from the grave 32 at

Młodzikowo (Fig. 2:2; Dymaczewski, 1958, s. 201–203, il. 55:9). Both examples are strongly connected to the Wielbark culture ornamentation style, especially by the presence of the zigzag element (compare Wołagiewicz, 1993, s. 22–23, table 46). Some traces of that stylistics are visible also on the vessel (stray find) from the cemetery at Domaradzice (Kostrzewski, 1953, s. 258). Although they represent only an 'admixture' to the elements of local character (the Przeworsk culture), but their determination is beyond doubt. They are always associated with the time of the largest and

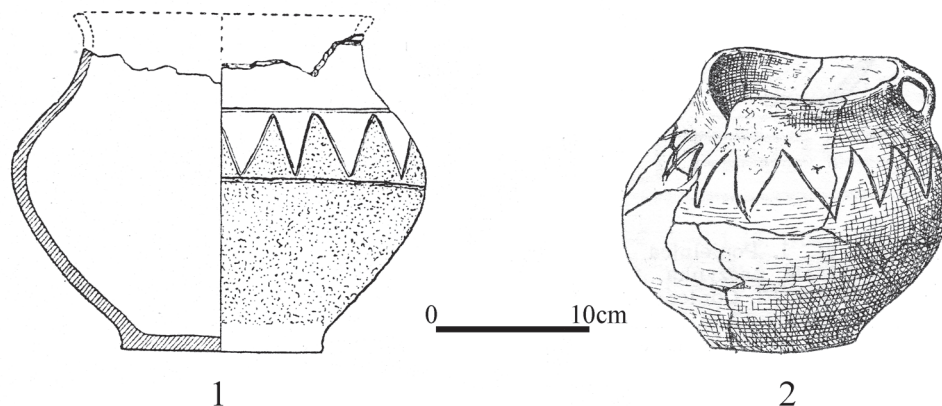


Fig. 2. 'Wielbark'-type pottery from southern Great Poland: 1 – Wymysłowo, grave 174 (after Jasnosz, 1952), 2 – Młodzikowo, grave 32 (after Dymaczewski, 1958).

2 pav. Wielbarko tipo indai iš pietinės Didžiosios Lenkijos. 1 – Wymysłowo, kapas 174 (pagal Jasnosz, 1952), 2 – Młodzikowo, kapas 32 (pagal Dymaczewski, 1958)

the most intense expansion of the Wielbark culture, i.e. basically with the B2/C1 phase of the Roman period. The presence of those elements makes me doubt about the very distinct border between settlements areas of the Przeworsk and Wielbark cultures in Great Poland, especially about 'no-mans' land' separating both zones (Godłowski, 1985, s. 87).

The presence of such sites leads to the presumption of various migration paths of the Wielbark culture, and this seems to indicate indirectly that it was not homogeneous in tribal terms. After all, the directions of expansion were various and its character was not uniform.

It should also be noted that certain 'Wielbark' elements occur in areas located even further to the south. Firstly, it is essential to recall a grave attributed to the Przeworsk culture from Dobra in Lower Silesia, which contained a bracelet and a pear-shaped pendant, very characteristic of the Wielbark culture (Fig. 3; Pescheck, 1939, S. 42, 317–318). Of course, in the territory of the Przeworsk culture more such assemblages of mixed character occur. They certainly document the expansion or at least penetration or trade relations of the Baltic zone and areas located further to the south. They must not be interpreted as graves of Goths' merchants (Kokowski, 1999 a, s. 48, map) or spies (sic! Kokowski, 2005, s. 282, map 20), since no sources confirm such hypotheses.

It should be emphasized that in present south-western Poland, the grave from Dobra is a unique one. It

is located in the Widawa River area of the Przeworsk culture settlement (Pazda, 1980, s. 98, 137), and is directly related to a cluster of sites concentrated along the Dobra River (the Widawa River's tributary). This cluster is characterized by extremely numerous foreign cultural elements, and apart from the aforementioned 'Wielbark' elements also Roman imports from there are known. This seems to indicate that the cluster in the mid 2nd century could have played a role of an area of intense trade, almost a trading post.

Further to the south, in Stary Zamek, a small burial ground of the Przeworsk culture was discovered, where also a pear-shaped pendant was found (Fig. 4; Domański, 1992, s. 105–106, 108). It was located in a female grave (number 6) showing several unique features: it was the oldest in the necropolis, the body of the deceased was unburnt (the other graves were cremations), the burial was probably covered by a low mound and grave goods were fairly rich (although it certainly was not a chieftain's grave). In this case we probably deal with the grave of a woman who came from the Baltic Sea area.

It turns out, however, that presence of the Wielbark elements can be seen in the materials from the Bohemian Basin and, in general, in the Danube limes' border zone. Some sites of this type have already been indicated by J. Tejral, as for example the complex from Wulzenhofen in Austria, with the typical bracelet (Tejral, 1970, ill. 4:1–7). The grave 47 from the cemetery at Kostolná in Slovakia has to be mentioned here (Fig. 5;

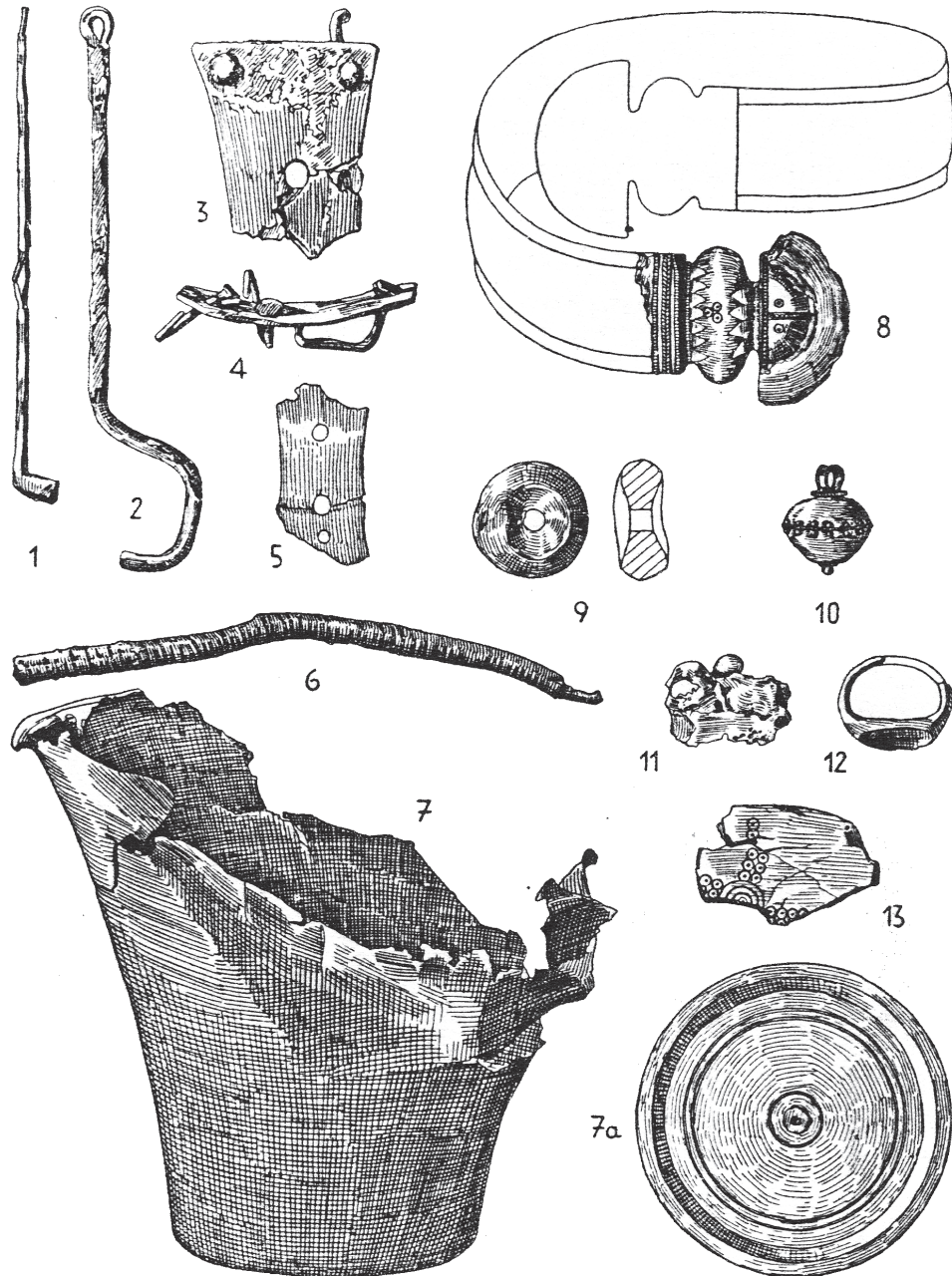


Fig. 3. Dobra, Lower Silesia. Grave with the Wielbark culture elements (after Pescheck, 1939).

3 pav. Dobra, Žemutinė Silezija. Kapas su Wielbarko kultūros elementais (pagal Pescheck, 1939)

Kolnik, 1980, S. 91–125). The best studied find of this type is the grave complex 718 from Třebusice in Bohemia (Fig. 6; Droberjar, 2005). The objects of ‘Wielbark’ (North-Elbian?) type are typical female cloths’ elements in the half of the 2nd century AD in the Baltic Sea region (Böhme-Schönberger, 1997, S. 64–66). In the Danube zone (Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia), we always deal there with the occurrence of characteristic Wielbark

elements with local elements, as well as the ones typical of the Przeworsk culture. However, E. Droberjar mentions about verly early ‘Wielbark’ type finds from Bohemia (or more general: from the territory of Maroboduus state) even in the phase B1a (Droberjar, 2005, s. 109). Perhaps it has some connection with the episode of Catualda, known from the fragment of Tacitus’ *Annales* [Tac. *Annales* 2, 62–63].

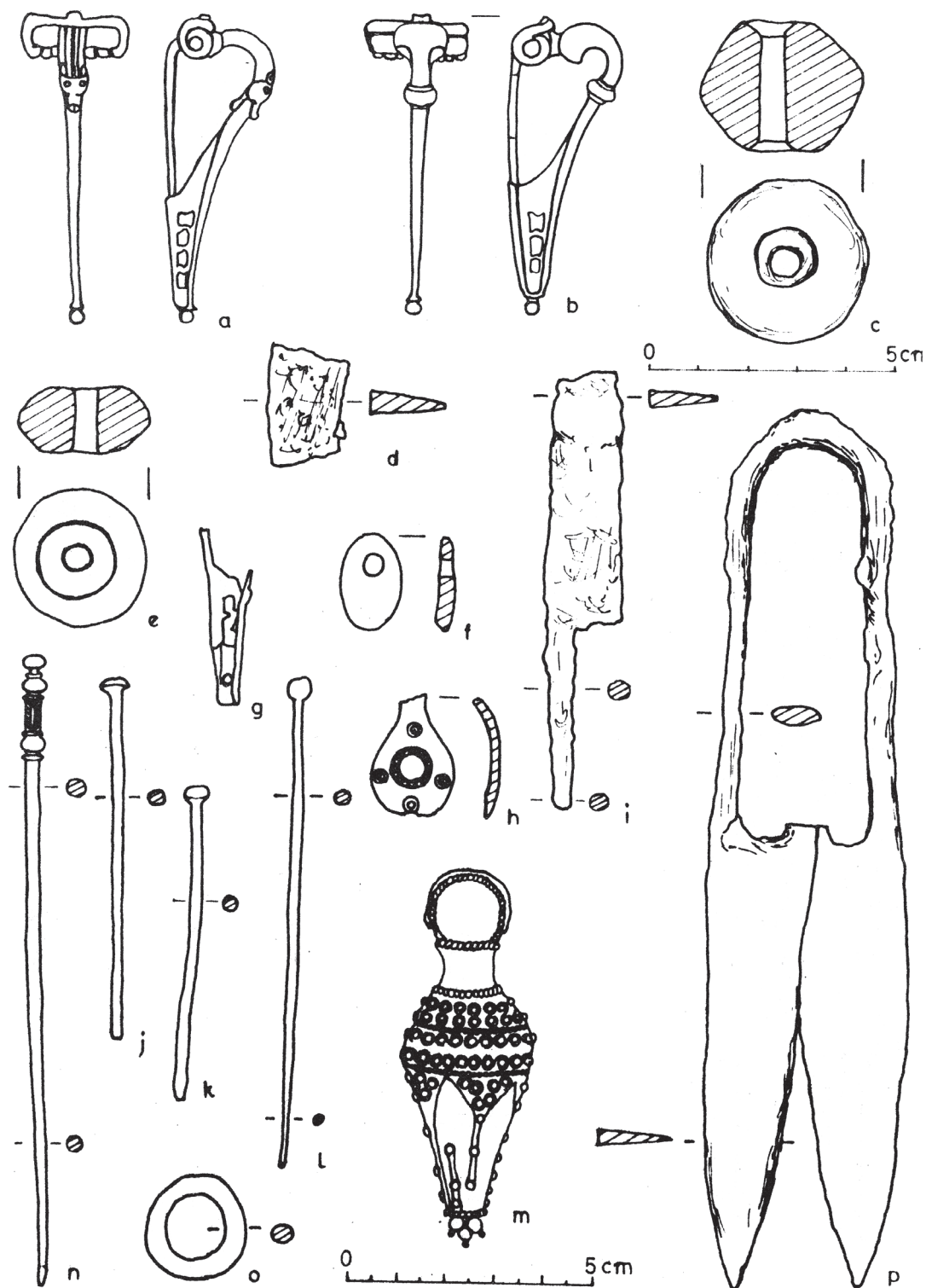


Fig. 4. Stary Zamek, Lower Silesia. Objects from the grave 6 with the Wielbark culture elements (after Domański, 1992).

4 pav. Stary Zamek, Žemutinė Silezija. Kapo Nr. 6 įkapės su Wielbarko kultūros elementais (pagal Domański, 1992)

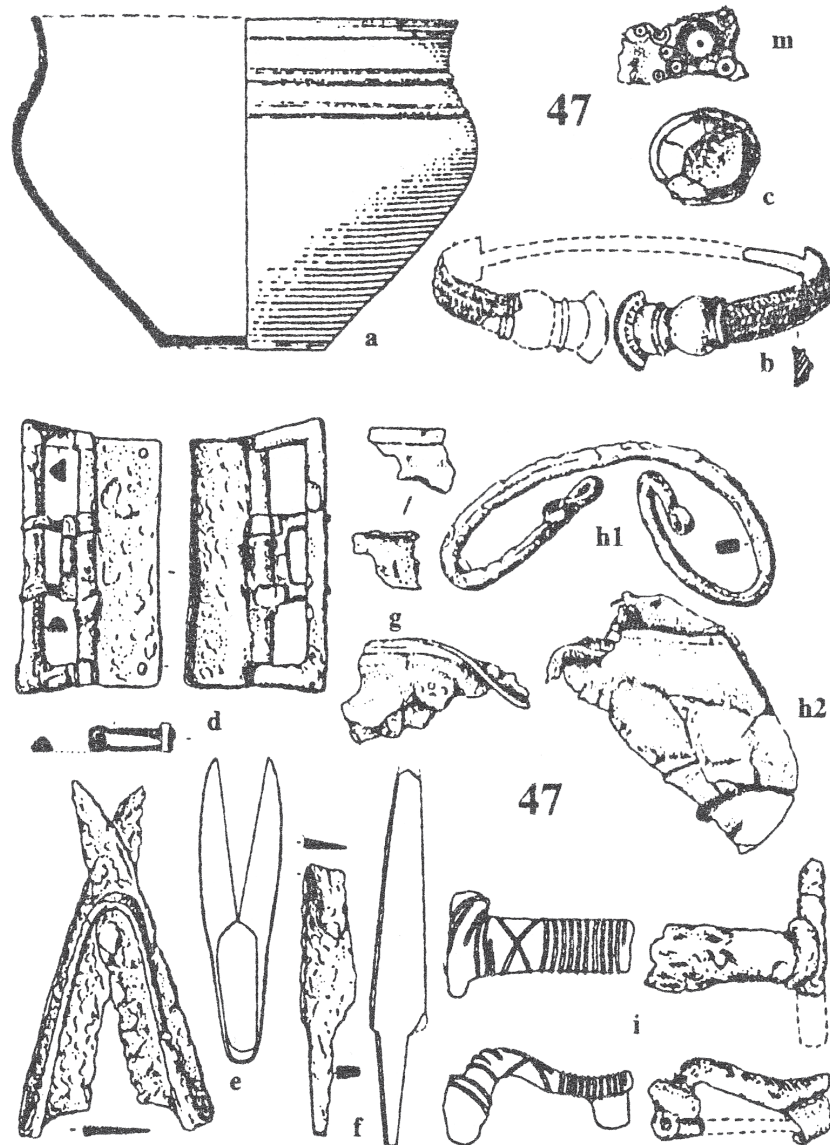


Fig. 5. Kostolná, Slovakia, grave 47. Grave with Wielbark culture elements (after Kolník, 1980).

5 pav. Kostolná, Slovákija. Kapas Nr. 47 su Wielbarko kultūros elementais (pagal Kolnik, 1980)

It seems that, alike in Poland, these artefacts are not only linked with the long-distance trade, but rather the chronology of these finds is almost always related to the phase B2/C1, i.e. the period of the Marcomannic Wars. Interestingly, they are more numerous than those recorded in the area of south-western Poland. It leads to conclusion that bearers of these cultural elements headed to the vicinity of the Danube Limes and maybe even farther into the Empire. The appearance of artefacts in the Wielbark type so far to the south

should be undoubtedly associated with movements of various Germanic tribes before and during the Marcomannic Wars.

Next wave of influences from the Baltic Sea coast to inland areas, namely these related to the late Roman period and the early Migration period should be also mentioned. It concerns especially the appearance of inhumation in the upper Odra River basin. There should be, however, distinguished grave assemblages 'in the northern type' from those related to impacts from the

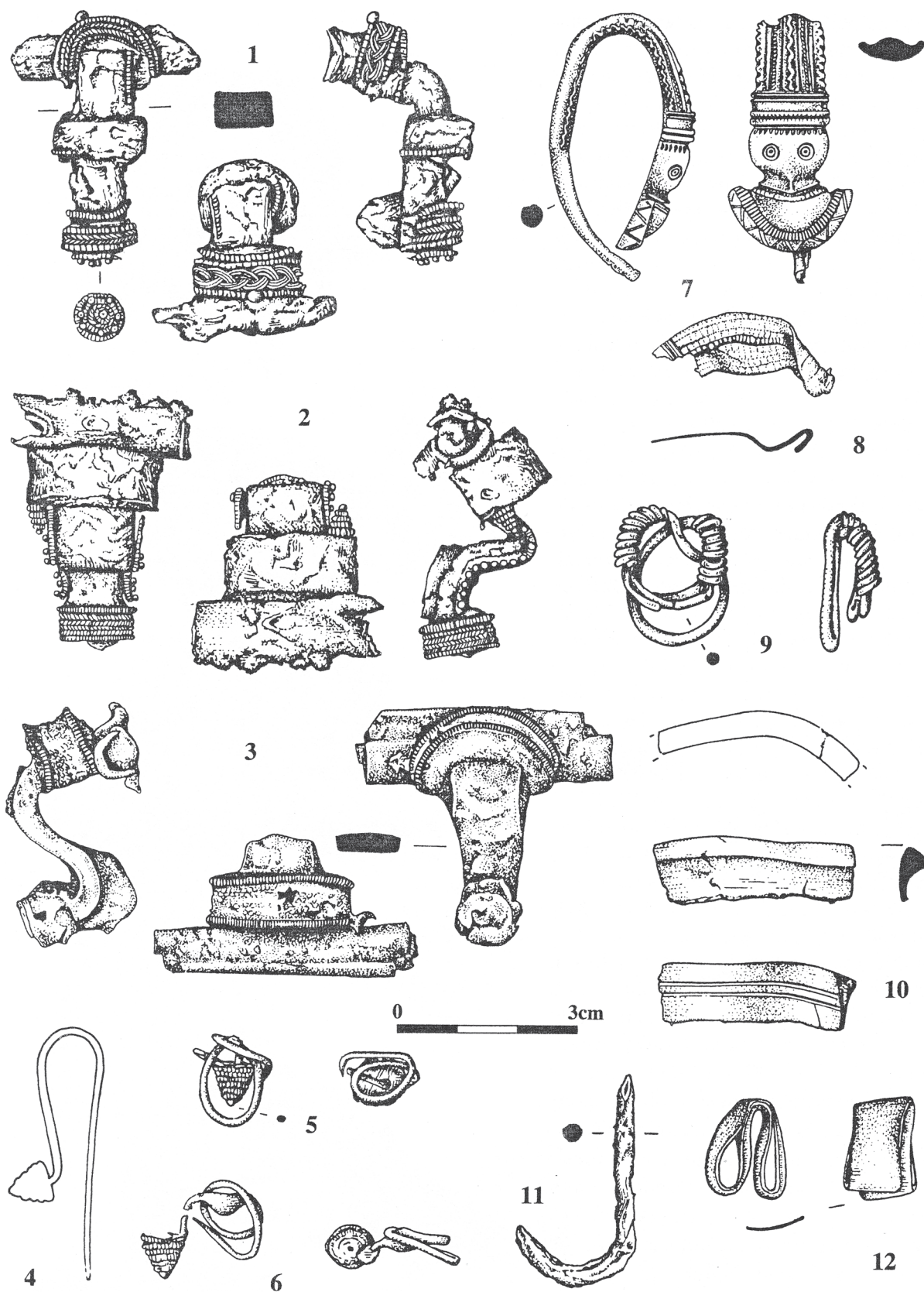


Fig. 6. Třebusice, Bohemia. Objects from the grave 718 (after Droberjar, 2005).

6 pav. Třebusice, Čekija. Kapo Nr. 718 radiniai (pagal Droberjar, 2005)

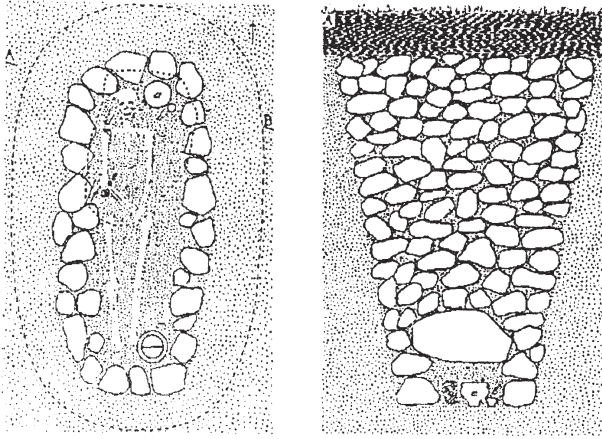


Fig. 7. Tymowa, Lower Silesia. Inhumation grave from the Late Roman Period (after Jahn, 1924).

7 pav. Tymowa, Žemutinė Silezija. Griautinis vėlyvojo romėniškojo laikotarpio kapas (pagal Jahn, 1924)

Chernyakhov culture, where we deal, amongst others, with disarticulated burials (Błażejowski, 1997).

We have to mention here the skeleton graves from Tymowa in Lower Silesia (Fig. 7; Jahn, 1924, S. 87–91). One of those features contained the very deep stone construction, which can't be related to any of known graves from the SW Poland and Middle Europe as well. It is probably linked with similar features from Northern Europe, where stone constructions, also of this type, are common (Sternberger, 1977, S. 258–261). From the phase D (early Migrations Period) we have to mention the grave from Parszowice (Fig. 8), in the vicinity of Tymowa (Petersen, 1939), covered by stones. This feature contained the a vessel ornamented exactly in the 'South-Baltic-style', very typical for the late Wielbark culture and Dębczyno group (Błażejowski, 1997, s. 182, ill. 4).

It seems that also few other skeleton graves from late Roman Period and Early Migrations Period found in the SW Poland, can be related to the western and northern influences. Just the same phenomenon we can observe in the late Luboszyce culture, where

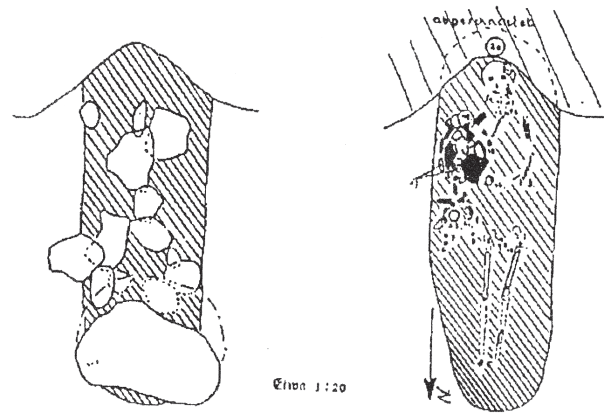


Fig. 8. Parszowice, Lower Silesia. Inhumation grave from the Early Migrations Period (after Petersen, 1939).

8 pav. Parszowice, Žemutinė Silezija. Griautinis ankstyvojo tautų kraustymosi laikotarpio kapas (pagal Petersen, 1939)

the inhumation is also represented in its late phases (Domański, 1979, s. 188).

Apart from the fact of practicing inhumation within grave assemblages artefacts evidently linked with products from the south coast of the Baltic Sea are present. It is probably a manifestation of the expansion of a cultural trend of not exactly diagnosed origin, gradually passing from the north to the south, from the beginning of the younger Roman period. Its apogee occurred during the phase C2, when the inhumation rite began to be practiced in the larger areas of Barbaricum.

Generally, we are able to determine two main waves of emergence of cultural elements from the south coast of the Baltic Sea in the interior. The first is the appearance of the artefacts characteristic of the Wielbark culture in the context of the Marcomannic Wars (the phases B2 and B2/C1) that should be associated with the expansion of this culture's population (the Goths tribes?). The second wave is the emergence of individual inhumation graves with grave goods of 'northern' features in the phase C2, which also documents a likely displacement of unspecified population.

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PIETINIS BALTIJOS PAKRAŠTYS IR VIDAUS SRITYS. IŠSKIRTINĖS PROBLEMOS

Artur Błażejowski

Santrauka

Baltijos jūros regiono romėniškojo laikotarpio tyrimuose svarbią vietą užima darbai apie Baltijos pakraščio ryšius su labiau į pietus esančiomis sritimis. Ligšiolinės publikacijos daugiausia analizavo šiuos ryšius dviem pagrindiniais aspektais.

Pirmasis – Baltijos jūros pakraščio ryšiai su pietumis Gintaro keliu. Suprantama, čia daugiausia nuopelnų turi Jerzy's Wielowiejskis, daugelio vertingų darbų, kurių teiginiai dažniausiai yra aktualūs ir dabar, autorius. Tų darbų vertė pirmiausia yra ta, kad buvo aptartas mainų prekybos pobūdis tarp „šiaurinių tautų“ iš vienos pusės ir romėniškų, daugiausia Padunijos, provincijų bei Italijos iš kitos pusės. J. Wielowiejskio darbus papildė kitų autorių publikacijos.

Kita tyrimų kryptis apima plačiai žinomą Wielbarko kultūros žmonių migraciją, greičiausiai, tapačią gotų genčių kelionei. Mano nuomone, verta pažvelgti ir į kitus Baltijos jūros pakraščio ryšių su vidaus sritimis ypatumus.

Manau, kad pirmasis vertas dėmesio klausimas yra Wielbarko kultūros elementų buvimas viduriniame ir aukštutiniame Oderio paupyje. Pirmiausia galima nurodyti Wielbarko kultūros elementų dalyvavimą formuojantis vadinajamajai Luboszcycų kultūrai. Nors tai ne kartą minėta, reikia pabrėžti, kad ta įtaka matyti jau nuo šios kultūros pirmojo periodo.

Galima priminti, kad Didžiosios Lenkijos pietinėje dalyje taip pat yra žinoma archeologijos paminklų, kuriuose Wielbarko kultūros elementai gana ryškūs. Tiesa, jie sudaro tik vietinės Przeworsko kultūros elementų „priemaišą“, tačiau yra aiškiai matomi. Jie susiję su didžiausios ir intensyviausios Wielbarko kultūros ekspansijos laikotarpiu, daugiausia su romėniškojo laikotarpio B2/C1 periodu.

Taip pat reikia pažymėti, kad Wielbarko kultūros elementų aptinkama dar toliau į pietus. Przeworsko kultūrai skiriamame kape iš Dobra vietovės (Žemutinė Silezija), buvo aptikta apyrankė ir kriaušės pavidalo kabutis. Šie daiktai būdingi Wielbarko kultūrai. Dar toliau į pietus, Sta-

ry Zamek vietovėje atkastas nedidelis Przeworsko kultūros kapinynas, kuriame taip pat rastas kriaušės pavidalo kabutis. Jis aptiktas moters kape, pasižyminčiame kai kuriais išskirtiniais bruožais. Šis kapas buvo seniausias kapinyne, jame mirusiosios kūnas buvo nesudegintas (likusieji kapinyno kapai yra degintiniai) ir pradžioje padengtas nedideliu pilkapiu. Kapas buvo gana turtingas įkapių, nors, tikriausiai, tai nebuvo kunigaikštiškas kapas. Greičiausiai, tai buvo moters, atvykusios iš kurio nors Baltijos jūros regiono, kapas.

Wielbarko kultūros elementų taip pat galima aptikti plačiame Čekijos ir Moravijos slėnyje. Ten visur greta vietinių tipišku Przeworsko kultūros elementų yra Wielbarko kultūros elementų. Atrodo, kad, panašiai kaip Lenkijos srityse, šie radiniai nėra susiję išimtinai su tolimesne prekyba, o jų chronologija – B2/C1 periodas, arba markomanų karų laikotarpis.

Reikia paminėti ir vėlyvesnę Baltijos pakraščio įtaką pietinėms sritims, chronologiškai susijusią su vėlyvuuoju romėniškuoju ir ankstyvuuoju tautų kraustymosi laikotarpiu. Tai inhumacijos papročio apraiškos Oderio aukštupio regione.

Be inhumacijos papročio naudojimo, reikėtų paminėti, kad įkapėse yra daiktų, artimų Baltijos jūros pakraščio dirbiniams. Greičiausiai, tai yra nepakankamai ištirtos kultūrinės ekspansijos iš šiaurės į pietus reiškinys, pastebimas jau nuo ankstyvojo romėniškojo laikotarpio pradžios, labiausiai pasireiškęs C2 periode, kai ir inhumacija vis plačiau naudojama didesniuose *Barbaricum* plotuose.

Taigi buvo dvi pagrindinės pietinio Baltijos jūros pakraščio kultūrinių elementų pasirodymo vidaus srityse bangos. Pirmoji – Wielbarko kultūros elementų pasirodymas markomanų karų kontekste (B2 ir B2/C1 periodai), kurį tenka sieti su šios kultūros žmonių (gotų genčių?) ekspansija. Kita banga – atskirų nedegintų žmonių kapų su „šiaurinėmis įkapėmis“ atsiradimas C2 periode, kalbantis apie tiksliau nenustatytą žmonių grupių judėjimą.

Iš lenkų kalbos vertė *Mykolas Michelbertas*

Įteikta 2014 m. birželio mėn.