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FUNERARY ARCHAEOLOGY



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Archeologia funeralna

FUNDACJA RZESZOWSKIEGO OŚRODKA ARCHEOLOGICZNEGO
INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY RZESZÓW UNIVERSITY

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Rzeszów 2013

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Contents / Spis treści

<i>Editor's note / Od Redakcji</i>	9/10
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Articles / Artykuły

Aleksander Bobko

Philosophical reflections on death	13
Filozoficzne rozważania o śmierci	20

Anita Szczepanek, Paweł Jarosz

The biritual cemetery of the Bronze Age from Opatów site 1, Kłobuck distr., Śląskie voiv. – the study of the funeral customs	25
Birytualne cmentarzysko z epoki brązu w Opatowie stan. 1, pow. kłobucki, woj. śląskie – studium obrządku pogrzebowego	44

Seweryn Rzepecki

“Invisible tombs”. From the research on funerary rituals of communities with funnel beakers	49
„Niewidzialne grobowce”. Z badań nad obrzędowością funeralną społeczności z pucharami lejkowatymi	63

Jacek Górski

The oldest graves of the Trzciniec culture	69
Najstarszy horyzont grobów kultury trzcinieckiej	94

Vladimír Mitáš, Václav Furmánek

Grave Arrangements and Constructions of the Western Enclave of the South-eastern Urnfield Cultures from the Perspective of the Burial Ground at Radzovce (Slovakia)	107
Typy pochówków i konstrukcji grobowych z zachodniej enklawy południowo-wschodniego kręgu kultur pól popielnicowych na przykładzie cmentarzyska w Radzovcach (Słowacja)	131

Jan Dąbrowski

Beiträge zur Forschungen Lausitzer Brauchtums	143
Przyczynki do badania obrzędowości kultury łużyckiej	163

Marek Půlpán, Agnieszka Reszczyńska

- Chamber graves of the Bylany culture (Ha C – Ha D1) in north-western Bohemia 173
- Problematyka grobów komorowych kultury bylańskiej (Ha C – Ha D1) w północno-zachodnich Czechach 211

Andrzej Mierzwinski

- The communicative aspect of burial mound symbolism. A commentary to Homer's accounts 237
- Komunikacyjny aspekt symboliki kurhanu. Komentarz do przekazów Homera 260

Leszek Gardela

- 'Warrior-women' in Viking Age Scandinavia? A preliminary archaeological study 273
- Wojownicze kobiety w wikingów Skandynawii? Wstępne studium archeologiczne 315

Dariusz Błaszczak

- Changing archaeological paradigms and the interpretation of cemeteries 341
- Badanie i interpretacja cmentarzyisk w ujęciu różnych paradygmatów archeologicznych 353

Reviews / Recenzje**Tadeusz Malinowski**

- Einige Bemerkungen zu musikarchäologischen Fragen. (Rez.) Anna Gruszczyńska-Ziółkowska, Perspektywy polskich badań archeomuzykologicznych. *Polski Rocznik Muzykologiczny* 10: 2012, 23–43 363
- O niektórych problemach archeomuzykologicznych (rec.) Anna Gruszczyńska-Ziółkowska, Perspektywy polskich badań archeomuzykologicznych. *Polski Rocznik Muzykologiczny* 10:2012, 23–43 377

Aleksandr Diachenko

- (review) A. Korvin-Piotrovskiy, F. Menotti (eds.), *Tripolye Culture in Ukraine: the Giant-Settlement of Talianki*. Kiev 2008: Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 255 pages 385

Chronicle / Kronika**Halyna Panakhyd**

XXIX International Archaeological Conference in Rzeszów "Archaeological research in south-eastern Poland, Ukraine and northern Slovakia" (23–24 April, Rzeszów, Poland)	395
XXIX Rzeszowska Międzynarodowa Konferencja „Badania archeologiczne na terenie południowo-wschodniej Polski, zachodniej Ukrainy i północnej Słowacji” (23–24 kwietnia 2013 roku, Rzeszów, Rzeczpospolita Polska)	404

Aleksandr Diachenko

(review) A. Korvin-Piotrovskiy, F. Menotti (eds.),

Tripolye Culture in Ukraine: the Giant-Settlement of Talianki. Kiev 2008: Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 255 pages

The results of excavations of the largest Cucuteni-Tripolye settlement Talianki have been published as special edition reports (Kruts *et al.* 2001; 2005; 2009; 2010; 2011), conference proceedings (Korvin-Piotrovskiy *et al.* 2003; Korvin-Piotrovskiy 2011), and more internationally-oriented edited volumes (Korvin-Piotrovskiy, Menotti 2008; Menotti, Korvin-Piotrovskiy 2012) since 2001.

This review focuses in particular on the edited book: “Tripolye culture in Ukraine: settlement-giant of Talianki” (2008) edited by A. Korvin-Piotrovskiy and F. Menotti.

Interest to Cucuteni-Tripolye cultural complex (hereinafter – CTCC) has been increasing steadily over last years. However most of books and articles were written in Romanian, Moldavian, Russian or Ukrainian. Therefore, “The Tripolye culture in Ukraine: settlement-giant Talianki” is an important step in introducing the CTCC to a wider audience. The papers included into the volume are bilingual (Russian and English), and provide the reader with general aspects of the Tripolye culture within the Eneolithic (Chalcolithic) period as well as specific research issues. The book starts with overviews of the Eneolithic and Tripolye sites in Ukraine. Two papers introduced the giant-settlement issue and history of archaeological investigations in Talianki. The following articles present materials found in the 2005–2007 excavation campaigns, and the analysis of data sets developed in almost thirty years of research. The two final papers focus on absolute and relative chronology of sites in the Southern Bug and Dnieper interfluvium, and the anthropological structure of the Tripolye populations. Thus, it is a logically structured volume, interesting for both the specialists and the general public eager to learn more about the Tripolye sites in Ukraine.

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A concise description of the cultural complex that existed for about 2,000 years between the Carpathians and the Eastern bank of Dnieper, the Forrest region of Ukraine and the Black Sea is indeed a complicated task, especially if one takes into account all the different understanding and key issues amongst the various experts. This is probably the main reason why papers “Ukraine in the Eneolithic (5 – 4 millennium BC)” and “Tripolian (Tripolye) culture in the territory of Ukraine” by A. Korvin-Piotrovskiy attract most of critical comments here. These articles mainly focus on the issues of chronology and periodization, development of the material culture, and interactions between the “Tripolians” and neighbouring populations.

Since these two papers do not contain many references, they should be read as author’s personal understanding of the CTCC. First of all, one may note the discrepancy in dates. If the formation of the CTCC was dated by the transition from sixth to fifth millennium BC in the first article, it was dated by the beginning of the fifth millennium in the second one. The discrepancy, probably, caused the appearance of LBK in the list of components of a formation of the CTCC (p. 21/23). This idea was reanimated with the so called “new dates” from Kiev Radiocarbon Laboratory after 1998. D. Gaskevich (2007) already analysed this issue, and it is not necessary to go deep into it here. Influences of the Petrești culture (p. 21/23) were notable in the formation of Cucuteni culture, not Precucuteni, i.e. within a transition from Precucuteni III to Cucuteni.

A (Dumitrescu 1963). Moreover, Petrești and Precucuteni cultures were formed approximately at the same time (see: Lazarovici, Lazarovici 2007, 28–31).

Inattentions to the issues of chronology cause some confusion regarding the interactions between “Tripolians” and their neighbours. For example, complexes of heard-breeders in Steppe were formed not in the beginning, but in the middle of the fifth millennium BC (Rassamakin 2004). The results, recently obtained by G. Motuzaitė-Matuzevičiute (2012) have shown that there is no evidence that confirms agricultural or stock-breeding economy in Ukrainian and the Eastern Russian Steppe before the middle fifth millennium BC. A. Korvin-Piotrovskiy associates the earliest FBC sites in Volyn and Galychna with the Middle Tripolye. Numerous Tripolye imports are known in the FBC sites in South-Eastern Poland, while FBC imports were found in Tripolye

sites in the Middle Dnestr region as well (for example: Markevich 1981; Kruk, Milisauskas 1999; Bronicki *et al.* 2003). However, the earliest of these materials belonged to the Brynzenskaya group of the Western Tripolye culture and may be dated to 3650–3400 BC (Bronicki *et al.* 2003; Włodarczak 2006), i.e. by the beginning of Late Tripolye (Der-gachev 1980; Tkachuk 2005; 2011; Ryzhov 2007; 2012 *et al.*).

Finally, one may note how a general expression regarding different economic activities in three geographical areas from Otroshchenko 2000 was wrongly elaborated. According to A. Korvin-Piotrovskiy, forest, forest-steppe and steppe zones in Ukraine determined the formation of two socio-cultural phenomenon, world of agriculturalists and world of stock-breeders (p. 11/13). Of course, human populations are dependent upon environment, but environment is not the only factor that determines development (O'Brien *et al.* 2005). The sites of the Globular Amphorae culture could be a good example of stock-breeding economy in forest zone.

“Giant-settlements of the Tripolye culture” by V. Kruts deals with Tripolye sites in the Southern Bug and Dnieper interfluvium – the largest CTCC settlements were indeed located in this region. Over the past few years, it has become clear that sizes of the sites have been markedly exaggerated (Diachenko 2010; Harper 2011; Videiko 2013 *et al.*). However, these sites were the largest Eneolithic settlements in the South-Eastern Europe. Long-term interest to the Southern Bug and Dnieper interfluvium has caused different opinions regarding demography and socio-economic development of the populations, as well as their interactions with populations of other areas. The main ideas, expressed before 2008, are fully presented by V. Kruts, and his personal view concerning his earlier reconstructions is clearly stated (Kruts 1989; 1993). It is not necessary to discuss the key issues here, but one of the postulates does require further verification. According to V. Kruts, “the Tripolye culture was more or less homogeneous all over its territory, and it is incorrect to believe that it reached a higher level of development only in the Cherkasy region, just because of the presence of the giant-settlements”. M. Videiko (1992) noted that socio-spatial hierarchy was the most complex in this region, but it has to be pointed out that spatial hierarchy itself does not reflect social complexity (Flannery 1998). However, the raised issue and its further verification seem to be a perspective direction in Cucuteni-Tripolye studies.

“Giant-settlement of Talianki” presents the results of investigations of the settlement for almost thirty years. It should be noted that the excavations in Talianki are among the most thorough and well-documented archaeological studies in the region. Papers that present results of investigations in 2005–2006 (V. Kruts, A. Korvin-Piotrovskiy, S. Ryzhov, and D. Chernovol) and 2007 (V. Kruts, A. Korvin-Piotrovskiy, F. Menotti, S. Ryzhov, and D. Chernovol) illustrate this. Large sets of archaeological, botanical, and zoological data were collected over the years of excavations in Talianki. Among other issues, the excavation campaigns focused on Tripolye house construction and the interior of dwellings. The related reconstructions were made possible thanks to the above-mentioned well-documented studies. Interpretation of burned daub of dwellings, that is different in composition, traces of timber, and location within the remains of houses, has formed the current understanding of the interiors (Kruts 1989; 1990).

Most material culture found at the Tripolye settlements consists of fragments of pottery. S. Ryzhov worked on ceramics seriation from Talianki, from the first excavations to 2011. The edited volume also contains his paper that deals with the so called “kitchen pottery” (“The kitchen ceramics of the Tripolye settlement of Talianki”). The author describes in details the technics and technology of pottery, its morphology and ornamentation. The relative number of these data has been calculated for each of the excavated dwellings, and ceramics forms have been reconstructed. Development of the CTCC “kitchen pottery” is a very interesting topic. Many years of Ryzhov’s work bring us closer to solving this issue.

“Flint implements of the Tripolye giant-settlement Talianki” by E. Pichkur presents description and analysis of tools and waste materials. Most of settlements in the Southern Bug and Dnieper interfluvium, including Talianki, contain just a small number of flint tools. The author argues that the lack of raw materials caused the reutilization of broken tools. One of the most important conclusions by E. Pichkur is that the implements made of local flint were used for stock-breeding purposes, whereas those for agricultural were mainly produced using the so-called “Volyn flint”. Therefore this opens up the possibility of import of raw materials or tools on a well-developed equal exchange system. Meanwhile, further studies of E. Pichkur (2012) have shown that sources of a good quality flint are also known in the Southern Bug

and Dnieper interfluvium, in the basin of Bolshaya Vys' River. Therefore, the relative number of imports from Volyn is much lower than it was expected earlier; and the imports rather circulated as elements of prestige economy.

Three following papers are focused on Tripolye house construction and interior of dwellings. Particularly, the results of experiments are represented.

“Interior of the Tripolian house (according to the materials found in the Talianki settlement)” by D. Chernovol, summarises and systematises the experience accumulated in years of excavations of the site. The author develops reconstructions earlier proposed by V. Kruts (1989; 1990 and earlier conference papers), discussing clay daub of different elements of the wooden carcass of houses, as well as location, size, form and details of construction of the elements of interior. Although some issues were developed later (see Chernovol 2012), the interpretations of the data obtained with excavations and presented in table 1, could be used in further analyses of the Tripolye house construction.

Papers “Experimental modeling of Tripolian houses of the Tomashovskaya local group” by A. Korvin-Piotrovskiy and L. Shatilo, and “New experimental data on the Tripolye house construction techniques” by V. Chabanuk focus on the constructive and/or destructive character of fire, and the issue of one- or two-storey houses. Experiment with a full-size model of a two-storey dwelling conducted by V. Chabanuk and V. Kruts show some similarities with the excavation results.

A. Korvin-Piotrovskiy and L. Shatilo also discuss this topic. Unfortunately, the authors did not mention the character of firing linked to the fragments of the platform from its top to bottom. This is the main reason why their conclusions regarding the constructive function of fire seem less plausible.

“Relative and absolute chronology of the Tripolye culture settlements between the Bug and Dnieper; and in the Middle Podneprovye region (non-calibrated dates)” by V. Kruts is one of the attempts to correlate relative chronology of sites, based on ceramics seriation of two regions, and radiocarbon and archeomagnetic dates. According to author, the recently obtained dates from Kiev Laboratory of Radiocarbon Dating are much older for Early Tripolye than they should, and much younger for the Late Tripolye. The number of absolute dates is increasing steadily, but it is still very low (Rassamakin, Menotti 2011;

Rassamakin 2012). Therefore, there is still “space” for different simulating variants of relative chronology (stratified settlements are not known in the Southern Bug and Dnieper interfluve).

The final paper of this volume is “Anthropological characteristics of Tripolye Culture population” by S. Kruts. The related studies are complicated because of the small number of individual graves and cemeteries. Moreover, we are still lacking information regarding the anthropological composition of Bug and Dniester culture. S. Kruts noted that formation of anthropological type of the Tripolye populations was a complex process that included interactions with populations of neighbouring cultures.

As a conclusive remark, the “Tripolye Culture in Ukraine: the giant settlement of Talianki” brings a new and fresh general understanding of the Tripolye sites in the Southern Bug and Dnieper interfluve. It is hoped that this volume, along with more recent publications concerning Talianki and the cultural complex in general will stimulate new interest in this fascinating prehistoric culture.

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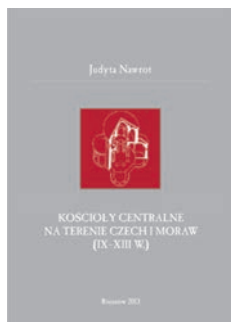


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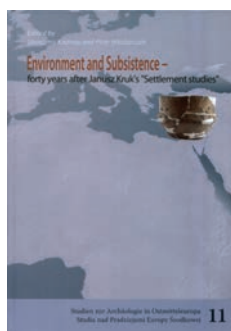


Judyta Nawrot aut.

Kościóły Centralne na terenie Czech i Moraw (IX–XIII w.)

Pierwsza publikacja w języku polskim obejmująca problematykę budowli centralnych z terenu Czech i Moraw. Autorka prezentuje dotychczasowe hipotezy mówiące o pochodzeniu rotund czeskich. Trzon pracy stanowi katalog obiektów wraz z informacją dotyczącą opisu budowli, tła historycznego, przeprowadzonych badań archeologicznych i architektonicznych, źródeł pisanych oraz datowania obiektów.

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Cmentarzyska społeczności kultury mierzanowickiej na Wyżynie Sandomierskiej

Część 1: Obrządek pogrzebowy.

Część 2: Źródła

Dwutomowa publikacja przedstawia wyniki badań i analiz cmentarzyska w Mierzanowicach na Wyżynie Sandomiersko-Opatowskiej – jednego z najważniejszych w pradziejach ziem polskich i Europy Środkowej.

Praca ukazuje się blisko 80 lat po zakończeniu prac wykopaliskowych przez Kazimierza Salewicza na eponimicznym stanowisku kultury mierzanowickiej. Kluczowe dla zrozumienia początków epoki brązu w Europie Środkowej zabytki, pierwszej złotej epoki w dziejach naszego kontynentu, uległy niestety zniszczeniu w pożarze magazynów Państwowego Muzeum Archeologicznego w Warszawie w 1991 roku. Niniejsza publikacja przywraca więc do życia środowisku naukowemu ważny i liczny zbiór źródeł do badań i analiz odległej przeszłości ziem polskich.

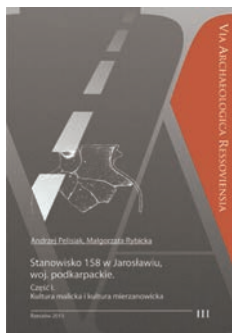


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