

Cultural changes in Pomerania between The Rega and The Słupia Rivers from the early Iron Age to the Roman period, with particular emphasis on the cemeteries in Gostkowo – Bytów distr. and Miechęcino – Kołobrzeg distr.

Summary

This work's aim is to show the cultural changes which took place in central Pomerania from the early Iron Age to the Roman period. The starting point for further conclusions is the development of materials from two cemeteries: Gostkowo – Bytów distr., site 1 and Miechęcino – Kołobrzeg distr., sites 4 and 5. Both sites have been known in the literature before World War II, when the individual graves were recorded there. Regular excavations in the cemetery in Gostkowo were carried out in the years 1961–1965, but the results were never fully published. Including features discovered before World War II, 365 graves dating from the early Iron Age, the late pre-Roman period and the Roman period (HaC, A2–C1b) come from here. At sites 4 and 5 in Miechęcino, which, in fact, are one necropolis, interim excavations were carried out in 1964, 1970–1972 and 1978. Regular research of the cemetery took place in 2006–2011. Taking into account the previous discoveries, a total of 221 graves of the Pomeranian-, Oksywie- and Wielbark cultures, and most probably also of the Jastorf culture (HaD–LtA, A3–C1b), were recorded.

The cemeteries in Gostkowo and Miechęcino are of great importance for research on the communities inhabiting central Pomerania in antiquity, because in the area between The Rega and The Słupia Rivers there are few known sites from which such a large number of features are known. In both necropolises, the materials of the Pomeranian culture are a minority; in Gostkowo their number is minimal. The vast majority of features registered in both sites come from the late pre-Roman period and the Roman period (A2–C1b). The usufruct of the cemeteries in Gostkowo and Miechęcino in such a long chronological range allows us to capture the changes which took place in the burial rite and material culture at the time when the people of the Oksywie- and Wielbark cultures buried their dead there. Both positions show surprisingly many similarities in this respect, which may be a reflection of the situation in the area of central Pomerania.

The conducted analysis allowed to capture two breakthrough moments (not counting the establishment and abandonment of the sites) during the usufruct of both cemeteries by the population of the Oksywie- and Wielbark cultures. The first one was during the A3/B1 sub-

phase, when there was a gradual departure from the La Tène style for the stylistics of the Roman provinces. It was also shown that the A3/B1 and B1a sub-phases developed at the same time. For this reason, I proffer to distinguish the A3/B1-B1a sub-phase, within which two stylistic trends developed (similarly to the B2/C1-C1a sub-phase).

The second breakthrough came at the end of phase B1 and the beginning of phase B2, when there was a significant decrease in the number of features in both cemeteries. Perhaps the population who used the cemeteries in Gostkowo and Miechęcino so far, took part in the colonization of zone C of the Wielbark culture settlement. When in the late stage of phase B2 there was a renewed demographic growth, the graves (with few exceptions) were located in other zones of the cemeteries and in a different burial rite (the majority of urn- and inhumation graves over pit graves).

One of the assumptions of the work was an attempt to capture the settlement continuity from the early Iron Age to the late pre-Roman period at the site in Miechęcino. This issue has not been confirmed, mainly due to the extensive destruction of the cemetery and a small number of metal objects from that period. Nevertheless, individual features and finds suggest that after the disappearance of Pomeranian culture, the necropolis in Miechęcino could have been used by a small community that adopted the patterns of the Jastorf culture.

The state of research on the period from the early Iron Age to the Roman period in the area between The Rega and The Słupia Rivers is still unsatisfactory (except for the middle Parsęta basin). The results of the research on the cemeteries in Gostkowo and Miechęcino can improve this situation a bit, contributing to a better understanding of some aspects of the life of the people living in Pomerania in antiquity.