

## REVIEWS AND SHORT REVIEW NOTES

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(review) P. Jarosz, J. Libera and P. Włodarczak (eds.), *Schylek neolitu na Wyżynie Lubelskiej (The decline of the Neolithic on the Lublin Upland)*. Kraków 2016: Instytut Archeologii i Etnologii Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 562 pages.

Traditionally, studies of the Late Neolithic of the Małopolska loess zone have rather been focused on the western part of this region, namely the Kraków and Sandomierz area, where in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century excavations took place of such important archaeological sites as Złota, Książnice Wielkie, and Mierzanowice (e.g. Antoniewicz 1925; Żurowski 1930, see also Krzak 1958; 1961; 1970; 1976; Kowalczyk (ed.) 1977; Bąbel 1979). The Lublin Upland, located further east, tended to be slightly overlooked, as greater numbers of Late Neolithic finds were revealed there only after 1945 (e.g. Nosek 1954/1955; Koman 1989; Ścibior *et al.* 1991). A research grant was designed to compensate for this important knowledge gap, conducted by the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences. An outcome of the project is the tome *Schylek neolitu na Wyżynie Lubelskiej (The decline of the Neolithic on the Lublin Upland)*, edited by Paweł Jarosz, Jerzy Libera, and Piotr Włodarczak.

The book consists of a total of 19 unnumbered chapters, authored by various scholars. It opens with a short introduction co-written by all three of the editors, explaining the spatial and chronological scope of the volume (p. 7-15). The subsequent papers may be divided into two groups: new publications of archaeological sites, and various studies regarding the subject of the book. They were generally arranged based on the dating of the analyzed sources, while more general articles were put towards the end of the tome.

To start with, the titular “decline of the Neolithic” was defined as a period of time between the disintegration of the Funnel Beaker culture and the emergence of Early Bronze Age (p. 10-11). On the Lublin Upland, its beginnings are marked by the arrival of people of the Globular Amphora culture (abb.: GAC) about 3 050/3 000 BC (p. 10), as well as the subsequent appearance of the Corded Ware culture (CWC) around 2 800/2 700 BC. The Final Neolithic continues after ceasing of the GAC 2 600/2 500 BC, and ends with the disappearance of the CWC approximately 2 400/2 200 BC.

The main idea of the book is therefore to reconstruct relations between the GAC and the CWC – two cultural entities occupying the same area for a major part of the Late Neolithic. Analyses were based mostly on a comparison of funeral rites, as graves are the best known category of sources of both the GAC and CWC. Despite the title of the volume, the authors decided against covering GAC and CWC sites within the strict geographical borders of the Lublin Upland. Instead, they opted for a range that better reflects the overlapping of GAC and CWC penetration zones. That is why the area under study was enlarged to include adjacent parts of the Polesie Wołyńskie and the Volhynia-Podolia Upland. Consequently, the book does not discuss the Grzęda Sokalska area in the southernmost part of the Volhynia Upland, where there are many recently excavated CWC graves (Machnik et al. 2009), but still very few GAC finds.

The first part of the tome is dedicated to GAC communities. In two subsequent papers, Marta Polańska introduces new results of archaeological research of GAC graves in Raciborowice-Kolonia, site 2 (p. 17-32), and Trzeszkowice, site 14 (p. 33-44). They are followed by the impressive work by Andrzej Bronicki, discussing the burial ritual of GAC societies on the Lublin Upland (p. 45-256). The author presents the full catalogue of GAC graves from the analyzed area, including a few never before published sites. The description of sources was supplemented by numerous figures – plans of the graves, new drawings of the furnishing, and even fragments of topographic maps showing the exact location of the sites. Bronicki concludes his paper with a detailed summary, regarding types of grave construction, human and animal burials, traces of use of fire and other rituals, as well as grave goods (p. 225-251). However, it seems that the article lacks proper closing remarks, as the issue of the place of the burial customs of the GAC on the Lublin Upland in the context of the remaining areas of the central and eastern GAC groups was not discussed.

The next section of the volume opens with a presentation of CWC graves from Sługocin, site 5 (p. 257-286), Lublin-near the streets of Głęboka and Gliniana (p. 287-292), Snopków, site 18 (p. 293-306), Lublin-Sławinek, site 1-2 (p. 307-328), and 3 (p. 329-348), Łagiewniki, site 10 (p. 349-358), and, finally, Białka, site 3 (p. 359-380). Among newly published CWC sites, it is worth mentioning the features from Sługocin, site 5 (p. 257-286). The funerary complex consisted of a central grave, surrounded by a circular ditch, which makes the first and so far only grave of this type found on the Lublin Upland. The presence of the ditch suggests that the grave may have been originally covered with a barrow. Furthermore, within the borders of the circle another rectangular pit was discovered, most likely a secondary grave. Unfortunately, no human remains survived due to the prevailing soil conditions. While the possible secondary grave lacked any archaeological finds, the central burial was equipped with an exceptionally rich set of grave goods, consisting of three beakers, one small amphora, as well as 118 flint artefacts, including two axes, three arrowheads, and a bladelike knife inset. The features of the grave construction and inventory closely resemble those of the Kraków-Sandomierz group of the CWC.

In addition to CWC finds, during recent archaeological research at site 3 in Białka, two Early Medieval barrows were uncovered (p. 359-372). Even more surprising was the outcome of excavations in Stryjów, site 30 (p. 381-409). Here archaeologists discovered two mounds, covering five graves in total, and a grave dug between the barrows. Dated to the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC, the ceremonial-funeral complex should be synchronized with the early stages of the Strzyżów culture. It is worth mentioning that the features from Stryjów make not only the oldest known graves of the Strzyżów culture in general, but also probably the first barrows from Małopolska attributed unquestionably to this period of the Early Bronze Age.

Moving on to papers discussing more broad subjects, Libera and Jarosław Sobieraj studied stone battle-axes of the CWC from the historical region of Lublin (p. 411-454). The authors gathered the extensive catalogue of such finds, as well as proposed their new typology. Moreover, the issues of chronology of various subtypes of battle-axes were discussed. A valuable addition to this chapter are the results of petrologic analyses (p. 455-478). In the next article, Libera presents his take on the far from easy matter of the identification of flint axes of the CWC based on the finds from the Lublin Upland (p. 479-492). Finally, Anita Szczepanek gave an account of the anthropological characteristics of GAC and CWC people in light of recent research (p. 493-508).

The chapter which follows, written by Jarosz, summarizes the CWC burial rituals in the analyzed region (p. 509-536). Unlike the similar paper by Bronicki (p. 45-256), the article contains simply a list of CWC graves from the Lublin Upland and the neighbouring territories (Table 1, p. 514). While many of CWC funeral sites were presented in the previous chapters of the tome (see above), in my opinion, a short description of older finds could make Jarosz's work easier to comprehend. The author thoroughly examines the CWC funerary rites, as well as addresses the issues of chronology and social structure. The CWC finds on the Lublin Upland resemble the most those from the Kraków-Sandomierz group of the CWC located westward. It seems that the continuation of building barrow graves even in the second part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, when the custom of digging flat niche graves prevailed, may prove to be specific for this part of the CWC (p. 532)

The book concludes with two papers authored by Włodarczak, presenting the new results of radiocarbon dating of GAC, CWC, and Strzyżów culture graves (p. 537-548), and finally summarizing the changes of funerary ritual of cultures of the Late and Final Neolithic on the Lublin Upland (p. 549-561). It seems that in the analyzed area from the beginning of the GAC, two types of grave constructions may have been in use: pit graves with no stone elements whatsoever, as well as so-called Nałęczów-type features – graves with a stone surround, a stone cover, and a pavement (p. 550). From about 2,800 BC, GAC graves in the form of rectangular stone cists (Podolia-type) started to appear in the Lublin Upland. Probably not much later, the first barrow CWC graves of this territory were built. Interestingly, the burial ritual of GAC stone cists appears to correspond with the tradition of CWC

single graves (p. 553-554). Around the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, when GAC graves were slowly disappearing, CWC people seem to have gradually abandoned the custom of raising barrow, instead preferring to dig niche graves in older mounds. The last period of the CWC, dated to 2 400-2 200 BC, is characterized as the decomposition of older rituals, manifested by the building of simple pit graves, and sparse examples of cremation (p. 556).

To conclude, the reviewed tome gives an extensive account of the funeral customs of the Lublin Upland and the neighbouring territories in the Late and Final Neolithic. Beyond the publication of the new data on the GAC and CWC on the analyzed area, the value of the book lies in its consistent interpretation of the recorded burial rituals, not only in the context of particular cultures, but also as a response to the subsequent horizons of ideological trends. It is quite uncommon to devote such an amount of work to the research of areas that, like the Lublin Upland, were believed to lie somewhere at the periphery of major culture changes. As a result, *Schylek neolitu na Wyżynie Lubelskiej (The decline of the Neolithic on the Lublin Upland)* makes a book of rare importance for studies of the Late and Final Neolithic of the Polish Uplands.

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