

## **"Studies on sepulchral pottery of Pomeranian culture in Eastern Pomerania"**

The term sepulchral pottery refers to vessels serving as burial urns, burial accompanying artifacts and containers found in the cemetery area, but outside the graves, which can be associated with unspecified ceremonial rites related to burying the dead by the prehistoric communities.

The research material is culturally related to all the developmental stages of an archaeological unit referred to as the Pomeranian culture, which had first appeared in the HaC period in the area of Eastern Pomerania, where it existed until the early and middle La Tène Period.

The main objective of the dissertation is to elaborate on the above-mentioned issue in a comprehensive way, basing on an attempt to carry out a morphological, ornamental and technological classification of the vessels.

The methodological assumptions of the aforementioned classifications refer to one of the main conclusions of J. Sackett's model of style, in which he defines style as "a highly specific and characteristic manner of producing, doing something" in a specific place and time. He also emphasizes that this "manner" is an inseparable and symptomatic element of every cultural tradition, which means that the specific form of a given artifact, in this case a vessel, proves to be the result of a choice made by a given community between several justifiable and equally feasible possibilities of achieving a goal. This choice was then passed by in the society and constituted a kind of a canon of producing and ornamenting containers that had been strictly adhered to.

Both mythical and symbolic meaning had been attributed to the produced objects (burial urns), making them a kind of symbols and signs. They generated a sense of community with all those involved in their production and use. They were therefore a significant element in the process of communication between particular groups, and the stylistic components described above contained some coded information. Therefore, it is emphasized that "style" should be treated as a complex concept covering various issues, not only those related to the material dimension, but also the manifestation of belonging to a group, the organization and place of individuals in the society.

The following chapters are devoted to the presentation of relationship between the diversity and frequency of ornamentation, and the density of settlement. What these considerations began with was an attempt to determine the function of ornamentation and it was eventually considered one of the few or even the only form of preserving information and all kinds of experiences by the pre-literate communities. Therefore, it was concluded that the stylistic diversity of ornaments should be associated with the transformations in the settlement dynamics in a given region or regions, which was confirmed by the Pomeranian culture materials, proving that the abundance and complexity of decorations intensified where there was uncertainty concerning

relationships, and it also indicated competition and rivalry in terms of possession or status. It is beyond any doubt that the purpose of decorating vessels was also to emphasize belonging to a given social group. In the opposite situation, in which the decorative activities are diminished, what might be dealt with is the conditions that provided less space for influencing the surroundings through visual means. This could have happened in the case of a low settlement density causing the isolation of people inhabiting the area. What might constitute another explanation, which does not preclude the former one, can be stable and well-established social relations.

A significant part of the dissertation was devoted to an attempt to establish the provenance of the symbolism of face, which the sepulchral vessels were provided with. Finally, it was established that the occurrence of the phenomenon at the initial stage was the result of intense interregional relations of the Pomeranian population with the Nordic cultural circle, in which the hallmarks had already been present since 2000 BC. However, the areas of North-West Europe were not the only source of cultural impulses reaching Eastern Pomerania. Since the end of the HaC period and the beginning of the HaD period, it was the ideological content from the Etruscan world, i.e. the southern part of Europe, that had acquired a significant meaning in this respect. As a result, simplified face images – expressed by means of even holes drilled just below the edge of the vessel nozzle or on its lid had been replaced by fully expressive and sophisticated anthropomorphic features resembling those on the Etruscan canopies. It allows to draw up a thesis regarding the existence of two sources of inspiration - horizons and the rejection of the current view allowing the possibility of a direct "evolution" from highly-schematized face images into the developed ones.

At the end of the work there is a catalog containing of cemeteries and extensive graphic tables depicting photographs of selected monuments.

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