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A PRZEWORSK CULTURE INHUMATION BURIAL FROM SIECHNICE (LOWER SILESIA) AND THE QUESTION OF BIRITUALISM IN THE PRE-ROMAN IRON AGE

Understanding a long-extinct culture is difficult but not impossible – especially if various categories of information are available. For studying burial practices characteristic of the Przeworsk culture both archaeological and anthropological analyses are of crucial importance. The presently available techniques (such as the ^{14}C dating, archaeozoological studies, 3D imaging) add to this traditional research framework. Although ancient written records might serve as auxiliary sources for reconstructing the symbolism behind the funerary practices and the development of burial rites, historical parallels, however, must be treated with great caution as they do not directly refer to the part of Europe discussed in this text.

This paper is an attempt to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age male inhumation burial recorded in 2015 at a multicultural site in Siechnice (pow. wrocławski, woj. dolnośląskie/PL). The study entails archaeological, anthropological and radiocarbon analyses. Our research interests included the buried individual's biological condition and appearance, as well as his social status and causes of death.

Furthermore, the existing hypotheses on the genesis of the inhumation practice in the Przeworsk environment have been revised. In central and southern Poland cremation burials dominated the extensive cemeteries associated with the Przeworsk culture throughout its whole existence, that is all the way from the early stage of the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age to the Migration Period. Although inhumation burials were a rarity, the practice persisted with different intensity simultaneously with cremation. In Lower Silesia, Kuyavia and western Lesser Poland a small number of sites with inhumation burials dated to the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age were recorded. Most of the Silesian burials were excavated before 1945 by German archaeologists and the finds went missing or were destroyed during the war. Therefore, it is not possible to reanalyse them using the wide array of contemporary scientific methods. This makes the data obtained from our bone analyses all the more precious, as they provide important information on the daily life of the local Iron Age societies. Such information is otherwise rarely available due to the fact that most of the bodies were burnt prior to deposition.

The research methodology applied for each analysis is discussed in the respective sections. All of the artefacts recorded in the Siechnice grave underwent conservation treatment and were partially reconstructed. The metal and ceramic finds were conserved in the Laboratory of Archaeometry and Conservation of Archaeological Finds in the Institute of Archaeology at the University of Wrocław (Laboratorium Archeometrii i Konserwacji Zabytków Archeologicznych w Instytutcie Archeologii Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego), while the human bones were studied in the Department of Anthropology at the Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences (Uniwersytet Przyrodniczy we Wrocławiu). The archaeozoological analysis was conducted by dr Dalia Anna Pokutta (Stockholms universitet – Archaeological Research Laboratory).

RESEARCH HISTORY

Site 1 in Siechnice is located in within a predominantly industrial area, which has been substantially transformed. According to the archives the hill on which the prehistoric settlement remains were found had originally been c. 250 m × 200 m. The geological substrate in this area consists of sands and gravels, which are covered with a layer of fertile soil formed on the basis of alluvial sediments. In the immediate vicinity of the site the Oława River flows. The analysis of the numeric terrain model demonstrated that the site had originally been surrounded with smaller river beds which cut the fluvial terraces covered with fertile soils. Due to such favourable physicogeographical conditions the location was settled numerous times. The first traces of human occupation are dated to the end of the Stone Age and the last prehistoric communities inhabited it in the Roman Iron Age.

The archaeological site (no. 1) in Siechnice was recorded already before the Second World War (archives of the Archaeological Museum of Wrocław/Muzeum Archeologiczne we Wrocławiu, map 2892) and was investigated in the years 2002-2008 in the course of rescue excavations. They yielded remains of a Funnel Beaker culture settlement, late Neolithic Bell Beaker graves, a late Bronze Age/early Iron Age Lusatian settlement and a Roman Iron Age Przeworsk culture settlement[1]. The next stage of rescue excavations was launched in 2015. They covered the area west of the earlier trenches[2]. An extensive Lusatian culture settlement dated to the Hallstatt period was recorded, as well as an isolated settlement feature associated with the Przeworsk culture and an isolated inhumation grave from the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age (**fig. 1**).

SIECHNICE, SITE 1, FEATURE 506: DESCRIPTION OF THE BURIAL AND THE GRAVE GOODS

The deceased was deposited in a large, oval, NW-SE oriented feature (no. 506) sized 216 cm × 138 cm and 28 cm deep (**fig. 2**). The western side of the pit was shallower and formed a characteristic »step«. The individual found in the pit rested on their right side with the head pointing to the north-west and the face looking to the south. Both of the upper limbs were bent in the elbow joints (**fig. 3**). The left one rested on the individual's chest, the right one was dragged up with the hand slipped under their head. The lower limbs were bent both in the hip and knee joints. The thighs were arranged parallel, while the lower legs were crossed.

Circa 65 m north-east of the discussed grave (**fig. 1**), in the peripheral part of the 2015 excavation area, an isolated settlement feature was found (no. 454A). The material from its filling suggested that it was contemporaneous with feature 506. Since previous excavations at the site yielded a Przeworsk culture settlement, it might be stated that the burial from Siechnice was located in its vicinity. It was by no means an extraordinary situation, as some of the earlier discoveries of younger Pre-Roman Iron Age inhumation burials came from settlement pits (Zotz 1932, 131-132; Domański/Lodowski 1984, 38).

The buried individual was furnished with dress accessories, personal belongings and items of everyday use, as well as foodstuffs (**fig. 4**). In the filling of the pit, an iron knife with remains of a wooden handle and some pottery sherds were found. On the right side of the individual, in line with their head, a jug was placed. It contained bones from nutritionally valuable parts of a cattle carcass. Right by the left elbow, a cup was found. It might be assumed that it had been intentionally broken prior to deposition since a few fragments were missing. Under the right elbow of the deceased a strike-a-light stone was found and above it a fibula and four iron rings, which might have possibly been attached to thongs. A buckle and a ring recorded by the individual's lumbar vertebrae had been parts of a leather belt, to which an awl-shaped fire steel was probably attached. The latter had originally been fitted with a wooden handle.

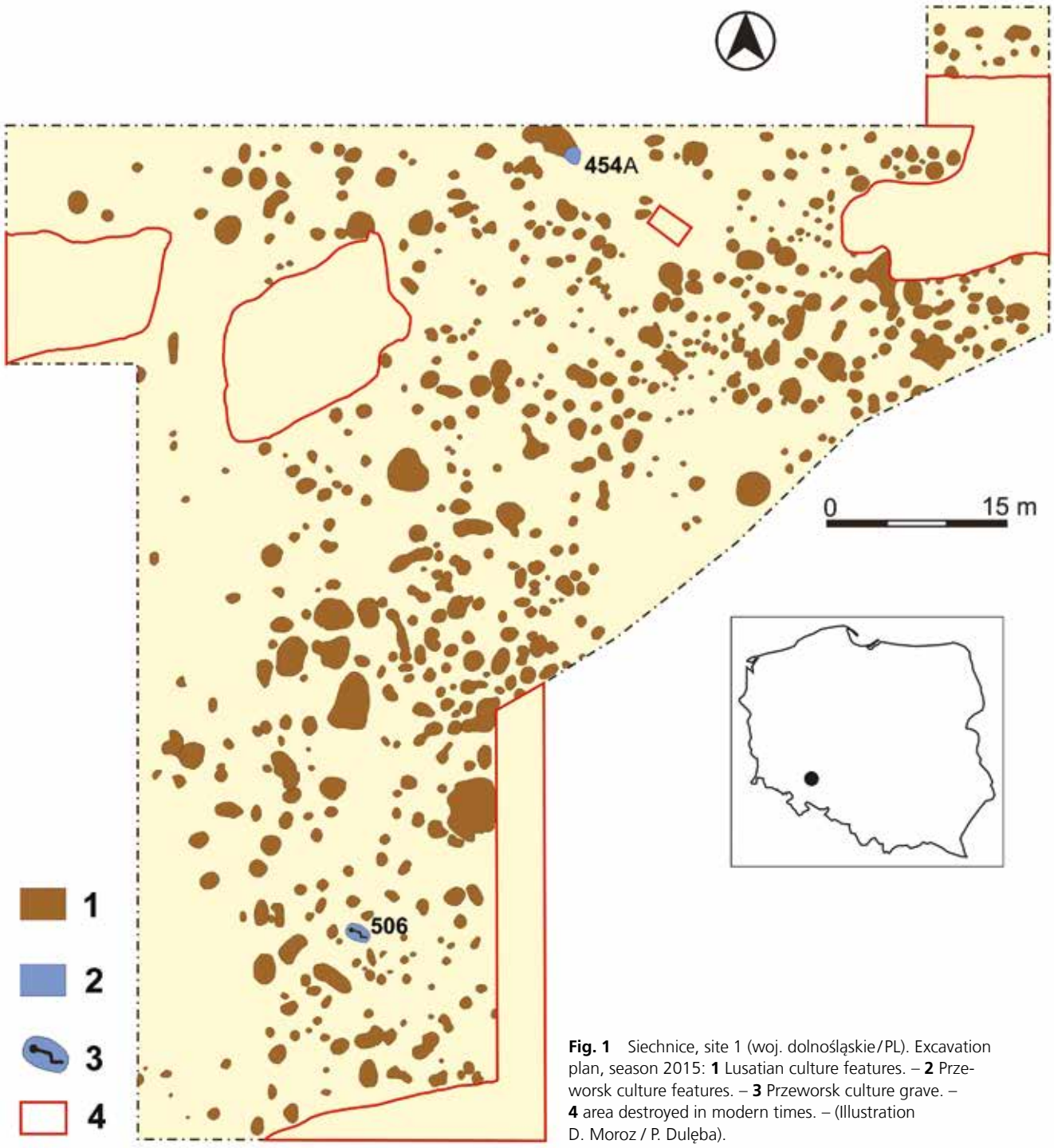

Fig. 1 Siechnice, site 1 (woj. dolnośląskie/PL). Excavation plan, season 2015: **1** Lusatian culture features. – **2** Przeworsk culture features. – **3** Przeworsk culture grave. – **4** area destroyed in modern times. – (Illustration D. Moroz / P. Dulęba).

ANALYSIS OF THE GRAVE FURNISHINGS

The discussed grave was rather typically furnished in comparison to other known Przeworsk culture burials from the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age.

Although the iron fibula (**fig. 4, 1**) was only partially preserved, it might be associated with type C according to J. Kostrzewski's typology (1919, 18 fig. 3). The discussed specimen resembles most a find recorded in grave 364 in Kamieńczyk (pow. wyszkowski, woj. mazowieckie/PL; Dąbrowska 1997, pl. CLXIX, 364/1). Not

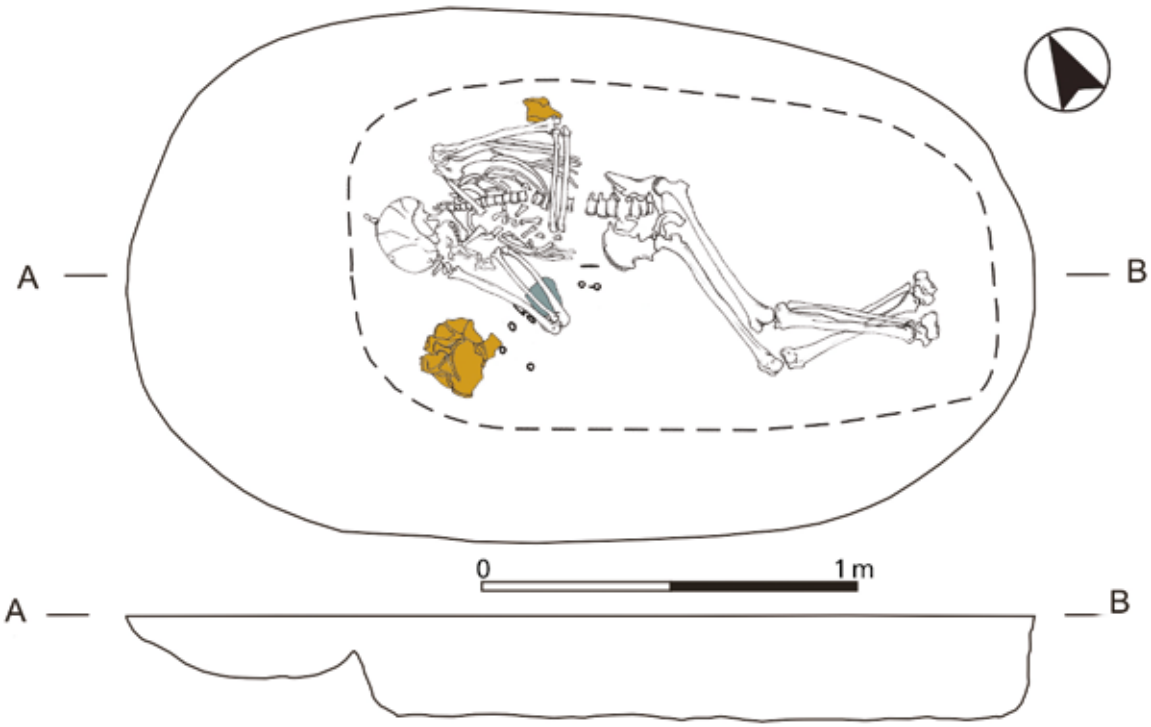

Fig. 2 Siechnice, site 1 (woj. dolnośląskie/PL). Feature 506. – (Illustration D. Moroz / P. Dulęba).

only is it of similar size but also has a characteristically widened and flattened »support fold« (*Stützfalten*) on the bow. The dating of the artefact – established on the basis of a relatively large group of similar finds – might be estimated to the beginning of phase A2 of the Przeworsk culture (Dąbrowska 1988, 29).

The hook of the iron buckle recorded in the Siechnice grave differed from hooks typically featuring other buckles recovered in the Przeworsk culture graves. In contrast to Kostrzewski's K48 buckles (1919, 62 fig. 48) its hook had a sharp end and it did not have the characteristic knob (**fig. 4, 2**). Right at the side of the buckle five iron rings were found. Those shall be interpreted as elements attached to a belt made of organic stuff. One of them might have been used to attach the buckle itself. Type K48 buckles were parts of male clothing – most probably fastened to a narrow belt, to which the sword was also attached. They are dated to phase A2 (Dąbrowska

Fig. 3 Siechnice, site 1 (woj. dolnośląskie/PL). Feature 506 during the excavations. – (Photo D. Moroz).

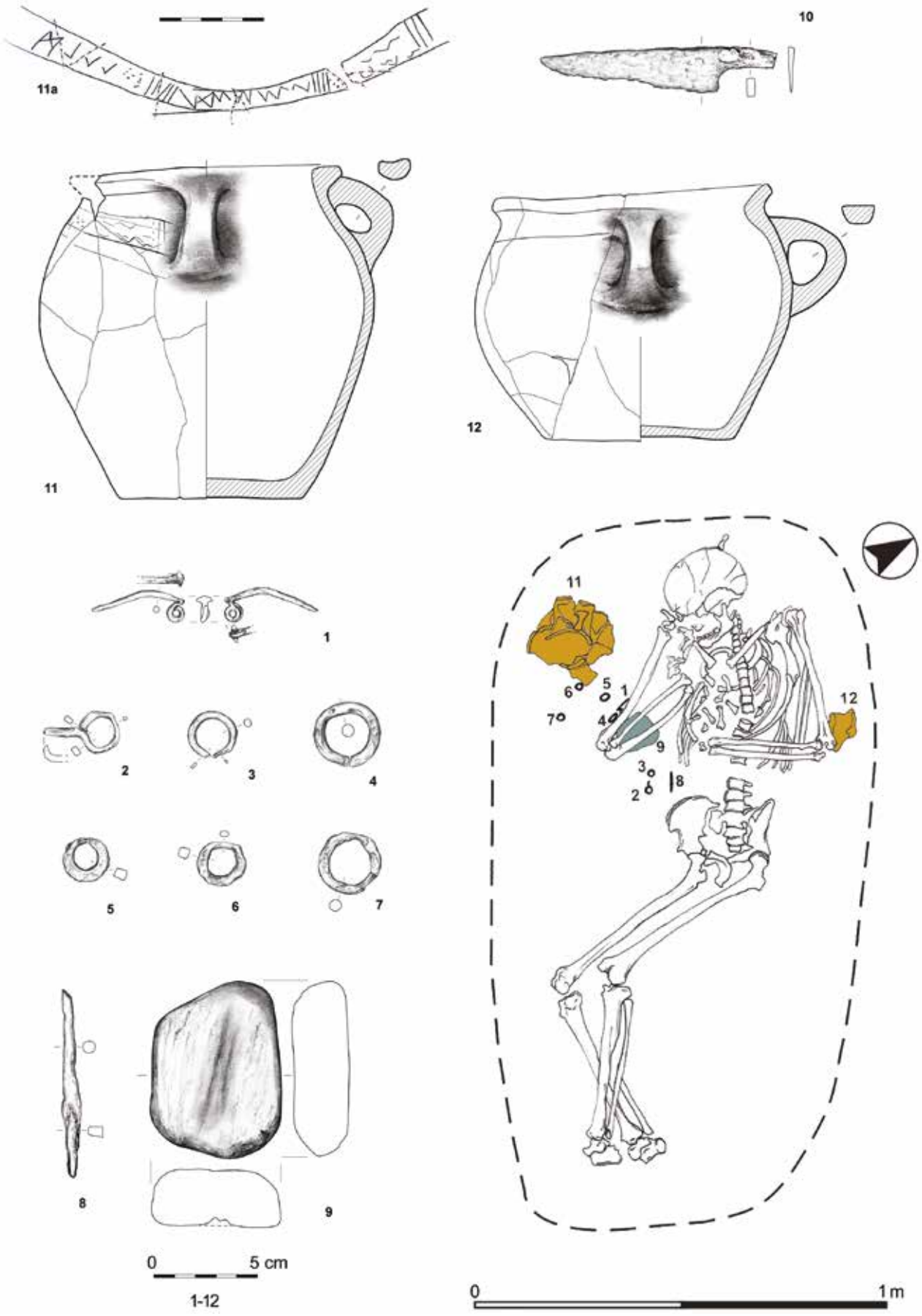

Fig. 4 Siechnice, site 1 (woj. dolnośląskie/PL). Feature 506: grave furnishings. – (Drawings N. Lenkow / D. Moroz / P. Dulęba).

1988, 29-30). The specimen from Siechnice resembled to some extent belt forms used in the Jastorf culture and was thus an archaic element in comparison to other items deposited in the grave. Such belts are a distant reminiscence of Celtic chain belts, which in the middle La Tène period were very often imitated by the Jastorf culture craftsmen.

The fire striking set consisting of an awl-shaped, iron fire-steel and a quartzite strike-a-light stone constituted an exceptionally interesting find. As it has been demonstrated by the Danish bog finds, fire-steels were male accessories which had originally been stored together with strike-a-light stones in pouches attached to belts (Ilkjær 1993, fig. 3, 145). In Poland, awl-shaped fire-steels were mostly recorded in the Przeworsk culture assemblages. They emerged in the course of the A2 phase of the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age and were most prevalent during the B1 phase of the Roman Iron Age, although they occasionally occurred also in B2. They were used in sets with strike-a-lights made of sandstone or quartzite (Jonakowski 1996, 93; Piotrowski/Dąbrowski 2007, 232). The specimen from Siechnice is the oldest known example of such tools from the Przeworsk context.

Awl-shaped fire-steels have mostly been recorded in Scandinavia, where they had been in common use all the way to the Migration Period (Ilkjær 1993, 251-255). During phase B2 of the Roman Iron Age in central European Barbaricum, especially in the Przeworsk culture, they had been replaced with bar-shaped fire-steels, also named »Polish fire-steels« (Ilkjær 1993, 246-248; Dąbrowska 1996, 46). Fire-steels and strike-a-lights were attributed to power and properties of fire. Apart from its utilitarian function fire played an important role in religious ceremonies and magic. It served as a symbol of light, sanctity, security and new life. Fire was considered to be of heavenly origin and to mark the border between the good and the evil, the *sacrum* and the *profanum*. The shape of the flame and its brutal, fertilising power were associated with male attributes (Kowalski 1998, 371-380). Probably, for this reason, fire-steels are mostly found in male burials (cf. Czarnecka 1990, 43).

The two vessels deposited in the Siechnice grave were fashioned in a negligent manner. Both the jug and the cup were deformed (**fig. 4, 11-12**) and resembled settlement pottery. In the upper part of the jug (**fig. 4, 11a**) a band of ornaments including dots, vertical and broken lines, as well as waves were incised after the firing. However, it covered only a half of the vessel's circumference. The framing lines were deeper by the handle, thus they had possibly been drawn from right to left. The incisions were shallow and in some places barely visible. The ornament was sloppy and looked as if it had been made hastily. It is disputable whether its function was decorative (which rather has to be rejected) or whether it was an ideographic inscription communicating a now unreadable message. According to professor Magnus Källström (Riksantikvarieämbetet; Swedish National Heritage Board), who has in many years coordinated the Runsvenska skrifttraditioner project in Sweden, the ornament might have been a form of ideographic script which later evolved into runes. Fascinating as it is, the problem requires additional analyses of similar artefacts and reaches beyond the frames of this article.

Both of the vessels found in the Siechnice grave represented the so-called old ceramic style characteristic of the earlier stages of the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age. Their forms might be associated with types occurring in grave assemblages dated to phase A2 (Dąbrowska 1988, 30 pls II, 19-20. 28; IV, 58). However, they differ from the typical Przeworsk culture sepulchral pottery in details, among which the poor quality of craftsmanship is most striking. On the other hand, comparable vessels were recorded in the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age settlement contexts (Dulęba 2009, fig. 3, 1. 14; Szpunar/Dulęba 2007-2008, fig. 7A; Żygadło 2012, fig. 10, 1. 6; Żygadło et al. 2012, fig. 19, 6; Bohr 2014, figs 9, 1; 11, 1; 12, 4-5. 9; 15, 3). A very similar cup was recovered in the filling of feature 454A mentioned above. The very fact that pottery of everyday use was deposited in the grave – rather than vessels made specifically for the purpose – might suggest that the individual found in Siechnice was buried hastily. It is possible that it was at that point when the ornament

on the jug was made and the vessel was attributed a special, symbolic function. This could explain the lacking attention to details and barely legible incisions.
To conclude, grave furnishings deposited in the burial from Siechnice date it to the early stage of phase A2 of the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age, which in the Przeworsk culture chronology covers the period from the beginning of the second half of the 2nd century BC to the turn of the 2nd and 1st century BC (Dąbrowska 1988, 62).

ANTHROPOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

After cleaning, the bones were thoroughly catalogued. Thereafter, their state of preservation was determined, as well as the buried individual's sex and age at death. Additionally, osteometric measurements were conducted, the individual's living body height was estimated and the odontological and palaeopathological diagnoses were formulated.
The state of preservation of the bones found in feature 506 was good. The cranium was fully preserved (state of preservation – *cranium*) but cracked in many places due to taphonomic processes. Therefore, a full anthropological analysis was not possible. Most damages were observed within its facial part. The softened bone tissue of the cranium was most probably exposed to some sort of one-sided pressure, which resulted in deformations. After the excavations, the cranium underwent a circa three months long process of drying. Thereafter, the remaining soil was manually removed, the surfaces cleaned and the cracked bone fragments glued together. However, even after the larger fragments of the skull were put together and the reconstruction was completed, the exact shape of the cranium could not be assessed. While the calvarium was successfully reconstructed, the bones of the facial skeleton were too fragmented and brittle to be used in the reconstruction of the facial skeleton. After the drying process, the bones were hard but the fragments adjacent to the cracks tended to crush. Finally, the proper anthropological analysis was conducted.
Viewed from above (*norma verticalis*), the cranium shape was defined as *ovoides* (Jasicki et al. 1962). Cranial sutures were partially obliterated. Concerning the sagittal suture, in S3 region (*pars obelica*) almost full obliteration was observed (obliteration grade 3), in section S2 (*pars verticalis*) obliteration was partial (obliteration grade 0/1; **fig. 5, 1**). The posterior view of the skull (*norma occipitalis*) was probably rhomboidal in shape but no definitive diagnosis might be formulated due to the separately preserved mastoid processes. Seen from the lateral side (*norma lateralis*), the skull displayed a moderately convex occiput and inclined forehead (**fig. 5, 2**). The zygomatic bones (single fragments) were large with prominent frontal processes. Temporal bones (isolated fragments) were featured with massive mastoid processes. In basal view (*norma basalis*), a lack of bones in the basal part of the cranium was visible.
As far as the postcranial bones are concerned, the sternum, most of the hand phalanges, as well as the metatarsal bones and feet phalanges were missing. The remaining bones were only slightly damaged by post-depositional processes.
The sex of the discussed individual was determined on the basis of dimorphic features in their cranial morphology (Comas 1960; Acsádi/Nemeskéri 1970; Buikstra/Ubelaker 1994; Loth/Henneberg 1996; Katzenberg/Saunders 2008), as well as in the morphology of their sacrum and hip bones (Phenice 1969; Novotny 1986). Features in cranial morphology (prominent superciliary arches, massive mastoid processes, prominent temporal lines, strongly marked nuchal lines and external occipital protuberance, everted gonial angles, strongly marked mental protuberance, angulation of the posterior border of the ramus high above the level of the occlusal surface of teeth) as well as the hip bone features (deep and narrow greater sciatic notch, proportions of the auricular surface and lack of preauricular sulcus) clearly indicate that the individual was a male.

Fig. 5 Siechnice, site 1 (woj. dolnośląskie/PL). Feature 506: **1** cranium viewed from above (*norma verticalis*). – **2** cranium viewed from the lateral side (*norma lateralis*), left side. – **3** dental state of the cranium under study. – (Photos A. Tomaszewska).

The age at death was determined on the basis of the ossification level of bones in the postcranial skeleton (Buikstra/Ubelaker 1994; Piontek 1999; Latham/Finnegan 2010), dental wear (Lovejoy 1985), extent of obliteration of cranial sutures and morphological changes in the pubic symphysis (Todd 1921; Acsádi/Nemeskéri 1970; Latham/Finnegan 2010).

The macroscopic analysis demonstrated that the ossification process of the postcranial skeleton was fully completed. The morphology of the pubic symphysis surface of the right hip bone might be classified as type VI according to Todd (1921). Full obliteration of cranial sutures might be observed in S3 region of the sagittal suture (*pars obelica*) (obliteration grade 3; the age of closure in males: 20-29 years). Dental wear was graded in the first and second molars of both maxillae according to Brothwell's scale. In first molars, it was graded 4+/5, in second molars 4/4+, which corresponds with the grade of dental wear characteristic of individuals in the final stages of age class 25-35 years (age class *adultus*). According to Lovejoy's (1985) classification of dental wear, all of the contact surfaces of teeth displayed traces of wear corresponding with »F« category. All of the factors considered above indicate that the individual buried in grave 506 died most probably at the age of 30-35 (age class *adultus* – adult).

The state of preservation of the postcranial skeleton was good enough to conduct an osteometric analysis of the limb long bones (**tab. 1**) and vertebrae. The measurements made it possible to calculate the basic indices of bone proportions and robusticity (**tab. 1**). Both of these values, as well as other indicative features, suggested that the individual deposited in feature 506 had a relatively robust skeleton.

Standard anthropometric measurements were performed on the cranium (Martin/Saller 1957). However, considering its significant deformation and the fact that it had to be manually reconstructed, the measurements do not fully match its actual size. The obtained values were used to calculate indices characterising the morphology and shape of the cranium (**tab. 2**). The results made it possible to categorise the cranium as dolichocephalic, featured with a narrow forehead. Due to the substantial deformation of

	bones [mm]	
	left (L)	right (R)
clavicle		
maximum length	146	138
longitudinal diameter of shaft	9	10
antero-posterior diameter of shaft	13	10
circumference	38	40
robusticity index	26 (robust)	29 (robust)
diaphyseal index	69	100
humerus		
maximum length	353	360
upper extremity width	53	–
lower extremity width	64	64
maximum midshaft diameter	21	22
minimum midshaft diameter	19	18
minimum midshaft circumference	62	65
circumference of the shaft at the middle	65	68
maximum mediolateral head diameter	50	–
maximum antero-posterior head diameter	45	–
olecranon fossa width	23	23
robusticity index	18.4	18.9
diaphyseal index	90.5	81.8
head shape index	111.1	–
radius		
maximum length	(259)	264
physiological length	(251)	253
minimum shaft circumference	50	53
upper extremity mediolateral diameter	23	23
upper extremity antero-posterior diameter	25	24
lower extremity mediolateral diameter	28	32
lower extremity antero-posterior diameter	22	25
robusticity index	–	20-9
ulna		
maximum length	284	286
physiological length	246	250
minimum shaft circumference	48	50
olecranon width	28	25
robusticity index	19.5	20
femur		
maximum length	494	(486)
length in natural position	482	(480)
antero-posterior shaft diameter	25	25
mediolateral shaft diameter	28	27
circumference of the shaft at the middle	94	93
neck length	35	37
antero-posterior neck diameter	33	35
neck circumference	113	117
femoral neck length	47	49
femoral neck transverse diameter	47	46
epicondylar breadth	86	–
robusticity index	11	–
length-thickness index	19,5	–
pilastric index	89.3 (no pilastric development)	92.6 (no pilastric development)
tibia		
maximum length	391	393
maximum upper extremity width	77	–
maximum lower extremity width	53	55
antero-posterior shaft diameter	28	27
mediolateral shaft diameter	21	20
shaft circumference	80	79

Tab. 1 Limb bone measurements and indices of the individual buried in the Siechnice (1/63/82-29) grave (feature 506) (woj. dolnośląskie/PL).

measurement according to Martin (Martin/Saller 1957)	measure-ment	value [mm]
M1	g-op	198.0
	g-i	155.0
	g-l	189.0
3a	n-l	189.0
2a	n-i	187.0
M31(1)	l-i	55.0
M31	l-o	90.0
M31(2)	i-o	43.0
M8	eu-eu	130.0
M12	ast-ast	104.0
M9	ft-ft	98.0
index	value	classification
cephalic index: (eu-eu/g-op) · 100	65.66	very long (hyperdolichokranius)
fronto-parietal index: (ft-ft/eu-eu) · 100	75.38	large forehead (eurymetopus)

Tab. 2 Cranial measurements and indices of the individual buried in the Siechnice (1/63/82-29) grave (feature 506) (woj. dolnośląskie/PL).

	after Manouvrier 1893		after Pearson 1899		after Breitinger 1937		after Trotter/Gleser 1952	
	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	l
humerus	179.9	176.7	174.8	172.8	179	177	181.5	179
ulna	178.5	178.5	–	–	–	–	180	179
radius	177	–	172.3	–	175.5	–	179	–
femur	–	173	–	174.2	–	175.5	–	179
tibia	173	173	172	171.6	174	173.5	178	177
body height (mean)	176.2		172.9		175.7		179.1	

Tab. 3 Reconstruction of the living body height [cm] of the individual buried in the Siechnice (1/63/82-29) grave (feature 506) (woj. dolnośląskie/PL). – r = right; l = left.

the cranium, the reconstruction of the individual's facial appearance was not possible. The state of preservation of the cranium and the dislocation of bones (which occurred both *in situ* and during the manual reconstruction) significantly affected its ultimate shape and – as a result – would also affect the potential reconstruction of the facial appearance.

On the basis of long bone measurements, the reconstruction of the individual's living body height was attempted. For that purpose four most frequently applied methods were employed (**tab. 3**). The lengths of the measured bones indicate that the living body height of the individual buried in grave 506 ranged between 176 and 179 cm. Considering the average height of males in historical populations from the La Tène period (Szczurowski 1997), such a value must be considered very high.

The dental analysis demonstrated that the individual had a complete set of permanent teeth in the lower jaw, while in the upper jaw none of the third molars had erupted. The set of maxillary teeth consisted of twelve permanent teeth. In the upper jaw teeth 2-7 (I2, C, PM1, PM2, M1, M2) were present on the right-hand side and teeth 1, 3-6 (I1, C, PM1, PM2, M1) on the left-hand side. A single left upper molar was displaced out of its socket, as well as a fragment of the left maxilla. The teeth did not demonstrate any morphological disorders (**fig. 5, 3**). Shallow cavities occurred in the neck area of the left and right second molar (M2) in the upper dental arch and on the occlusal surface of the left mandibular second molar (M2). Both the maxillary and mandibular alveolar processes displayed clear traces of periodontal pathology. The signif-

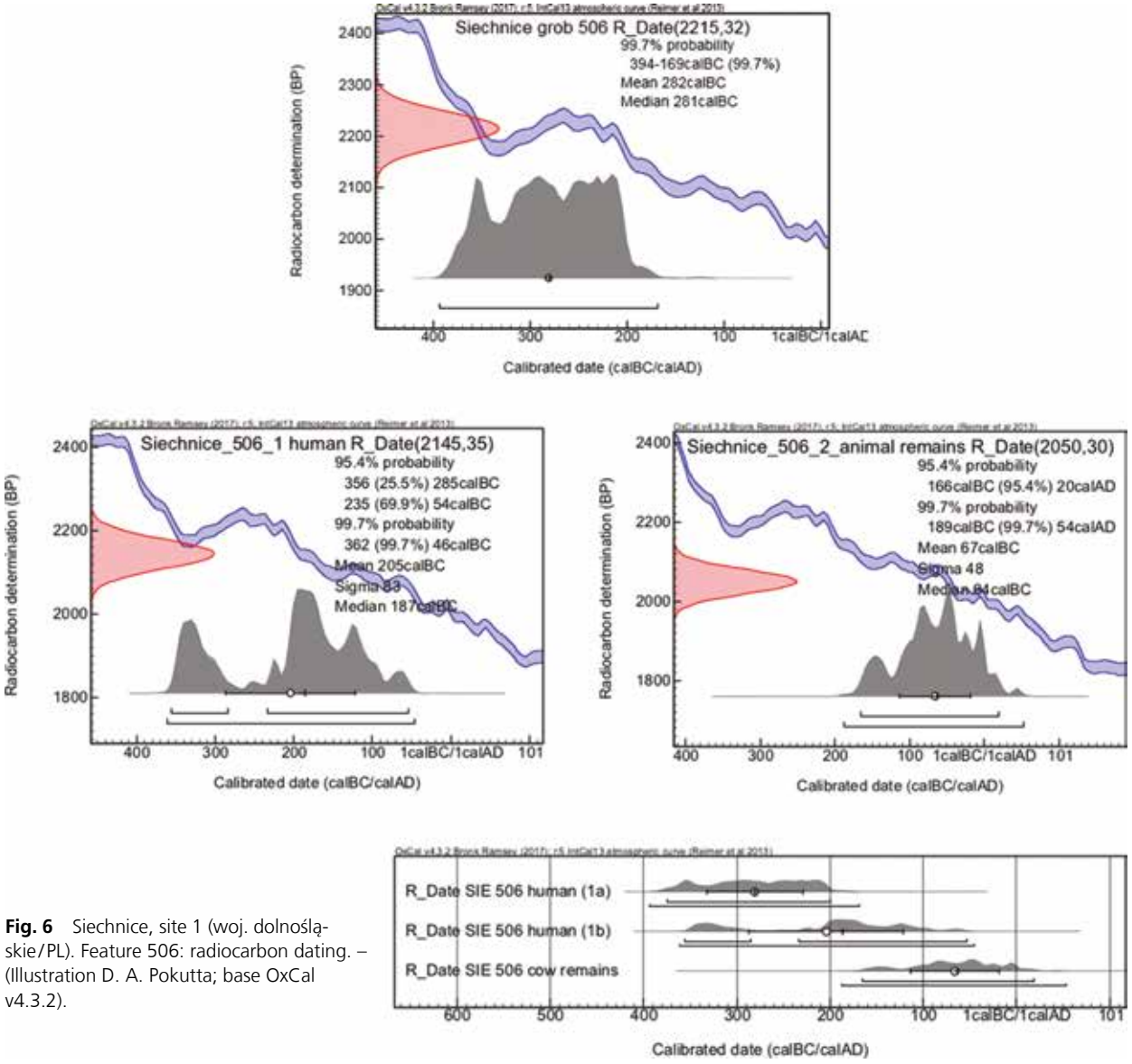

Fig. 6 Siechnice, site 1 (woj. dolnośląskie/PL). Feature 506: radiocarbon dating. – (Illustration D. A. Pokutta; base OxCal v4.3.2).

icant bone loss was visible all along them, which had probably resulted in the exposure of the individual's tooth necks and dental instability (Bornimoulin et al. 1995).

Diagnosing pathological changes of the skeleton is an essential part of anthropological studies in the context of analysing the individual's biological condition. Apart from periodontal pathologies, minor changes on the sixth dorsal vertebra (Th6) were detected. They affected the lower surface of the vertebral body and had probably been the result of a minor trauma of the fibrous ring of the intervertebral disc. No other traces of developmental, pathological and post-traumatic changes have otherwise been observed. Neither were there detected traces of pathological conditions on the cranium – including those which might have been direct causes of death. As far as the non-metric features are concerned, supra-orbital notches have been observed on both sides of the cranium.

To sum up, it might be stated that feature 506 from site I/63/82-29 AZP in Siechnice contained a burial of an adult, tall male. Traces of a minor trauma in the dorsal part of the spine and advanced periodontal pathologies were observed. The cause of death of the individual could not be identified.

RADIOCARBON DATING

Three bone samples were taken for accelerator mass spectrometry (AMS) ^{14}C dating in two different facilities, in the Poznańskie Laboratorium Radiowęglowe (Poznań Radiocarbon Laboratory) and in the Tandem Laboratory of the Uppsala universitet. Samples of 2 g of bone were taken from different parts of the mandible of the adult individual from Siechnice 506 (**fig. 6**). The animal remains found in the grave were also radiocarbon dated. The bone collagen was extracted following the ultrafiltration method described in Brown et al. (1988). The surface was mechanically cleaned (scraping, sandblasting), and later ultrasonically cleaned in boiled distilled water, pH 3. The samples were pulverized and decalcified in 2 % hydrochloric acid (HCl). The decalcified material was then solved in 0.01 N HCl and gelatinized at 58 °C for approx. 20 h. Subsequently, the gelatin solution was filtered to remove any remaining solids, and then ultrafiltered to remove the < 30-kD fraction and then lyophilized. The ^{14}C dating was performed in different AMS facilities and on different parts of the skeleton from Siechnice 506 (the Uppsala lab, 2215 ± 32 BP, 394-169 cal BC [97 %]; the Poznań lab, 2145 ± 35 BP, 362-46 cal BC [99,7 %]), which may explain the deviations in results. The faunal samples yielded deviated values due to the intensive remodelling of the bone structure associated with biological growth and a very young age of the analysed animal (calf, under 2 years of age, femur sample, the Poznań lab, 2050 ± 30 BP, 189 cal BC to 54 cal AD, 99,7 %). At the current stage of research, we may only conclude that the analysed male from Siechnice died between the mid-3rd and the mid-1st century BC. Such old radiocarbon dates of the human skeleton samples maybe point to fish consumption and freshwater reservoir effects (Philippsen 2013).

Measurements calibrated in this way point at a relatively long period of time, which was generally situated within the middle and late La Tène period or – in other terms – within the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age. Low sensitivity of the radiocarbon method results in this case mainly from the calibration curve plateau featuring the discussed chronological period. It poses almost as many interpretation problems, as the plateau characteristic of the Hallstatt period (cf. Maise 1998, 218-219. 230 fig. 22; Walanus/Goslar 2009, 50-53).

THE SIECHNICE GRAVE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE LOCAL YOUNGER PRE-ROMAN IRON AGE SETTLEMENT

Lower Silesia might be generally divided into two separate geographical zones – the uplands and the lowlands. Among the latter, the Wrocław Plain is featured with most fertile, loess soils. Less agriculturally favourable lowland areas are located north of the Oder and in the north-western part of the region. In the La Tène period the areas situated between the Bystrzyca and Oława Rivers – including both part of the Wrocław Plain and the upland areas south of it – were inhabited by the La Tène culture communities (Woźniak 1970, map 1). While the archaeological sources do not provide a clear terminus of this occupation, there is no evidence that any Celtic settlements existed there after stage Lt C1b. Gradually, individuals representing the Przeworsk cultural model emerged in the area. Contrary to the existing opinions, in the initial phase of the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age (phase A1) the Przeworsk settlement did not cross the Oder line and thus did not enter the Wrocław Plain. The Lower Silesian finds of Kostrzewski's A- and B-type fibulae cited in the literature were either discovered in a state which did not allow for a correct identification or was recorded in the area which had not been previously settled by the La Tène culture communities (Pescheck 1939, 20). There is, therefore, no credible data confirming the existence of the Przeworsk culture settlement between the Bystrzyca and Oława Rivers in phase Lt C2 (which roughly corresponds with

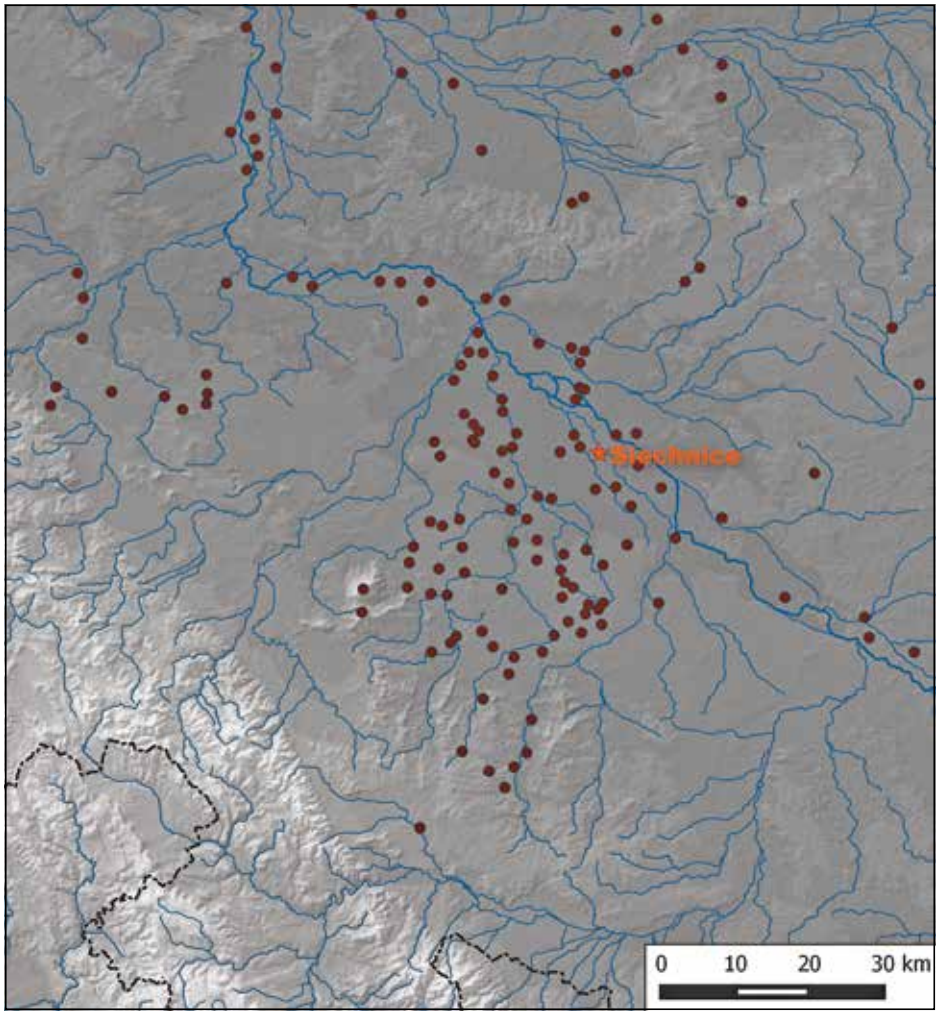

Fig. 7 Przeworsk culture settlement in Lower Silesia during phases A1-A2. – (Illustration P. Dulęba).

phase A1). During phase A2 (**fig. 7**) the Przeworsk settlement was recorded almost in the whole Lower Silesia (Pazda 1980, 22-23 map 2).

Such a situation is difficult to explain. It might possibly be related to the existence of an archaeologically undetected La Tène culture settlement. The earliest Przeworsk grave assemblages recorded in this part of Lower Silesia were furnished with short variants of Kostrzewski's C-type fibulae (Pescheck 1939, 21 figs 11, 40; 77, 9) – just as the discussed burial from Siechnice. The individual buried in Siechnice belonged most probably to the first generation of local Przeworsk settlers. However, their emergence in the area did not result from any spectacular, long-distance migration but rather from a slow movement which at some points crossed the line of the Oder, because the sites dated to the A1 stage are known from the neighbouring areas (Godłowski 1985, 20-23 map 1).

INHUMATION IN THE YOUNGER PRE-ROMAN IRON AGE PRZEWORSK CULTURE

The earliest inhumation graves were moderately, or even modestly, furnished in comparison to other younger Pre-Roman Iron Age burials. Therefore they are sometimes difficult to date on the basis of the find assemblages they contained. As T. Dąbrowska has argued, the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age inhumation burials

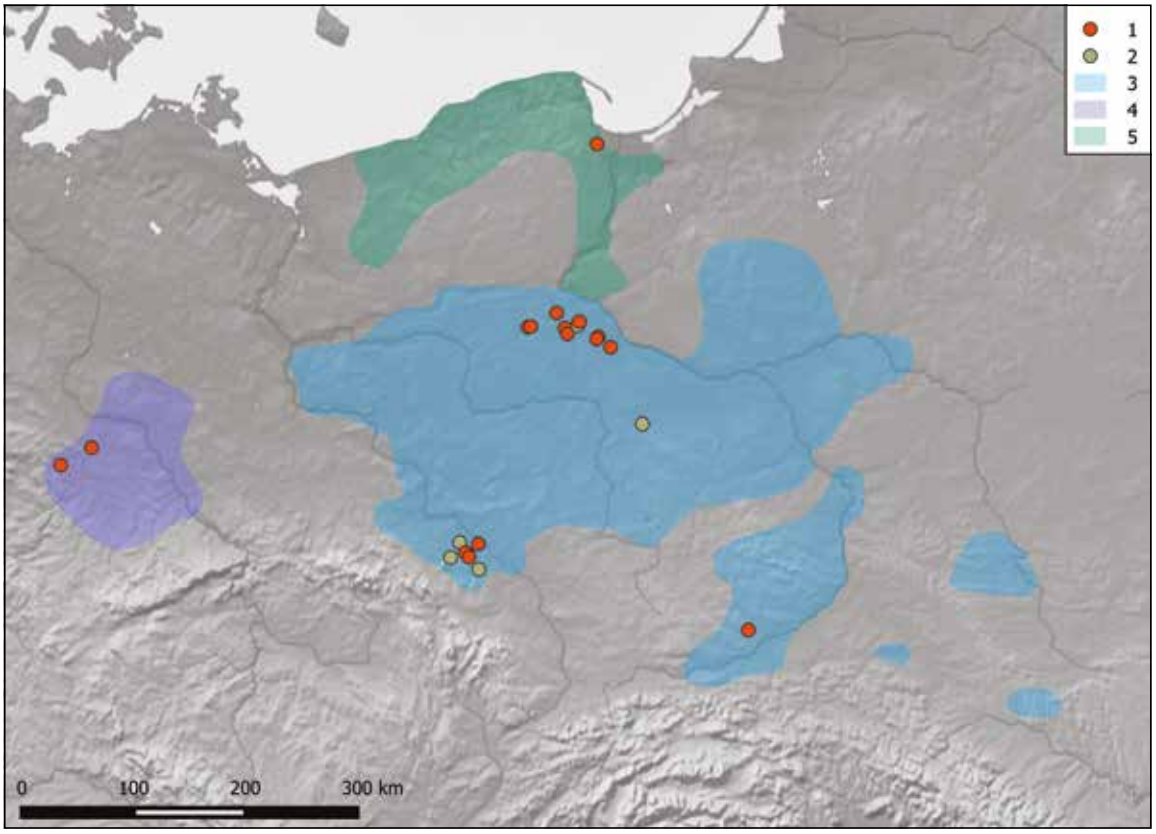

Fig. 8 Early horizon of inhumation burials from the Przeworsk culture and adjacent cultural units: **1** graves from phase A2. – **2** graves generally dated to the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age. – **3** Przeworsk culture. – **4** areas influenced by the Przeworsk culture. – **5** Oksywie culture. – (After Dąbrowska 1988, map 18; Margos 2000, 262-263; with additions by P. Dulęba).

might be divided into two main chronological groups. The earlier one might be dated to phase A2 and the second to phase A3 or even A3-B1 (Dąbrowska 1988, 142-143). Graves of the earlier horizon (**fig. 8**) were clustered in two clear regional concentrations: in Kuyavia and in Lower Silesia. Isolated graves belonging to this group were also recorded in western Lesser Poland, in Saxony-Anhalt, which was strongly connected to the Przeworsk cultural zone (Hachmann 1957), and at the Oksywie sites in Pomerania (Margos 2000, 257). In the final part of the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age and at the beginning of the Roman Iron Age inhumation was practised more frequently in the area between the Vistula and the Oder (**fig. 9**). The concentrations of inhumation graves in Kuyavia and Lower Silesia still existed, and a few isolated burials were recorded in the southern Greater Poland and in the Łęczyca area. Moreover, inhumation graves emerged in greater numbers in western Lesser Poland, the northern part of Mazovia and in the Oksywie cultural zone (Dąbrowska 1988, map 18; Margos 2000, 262-263).

Lower Silesia, and more precisely the Wrocław Plain yielded a few Przeworsk inhumation burials, which might be associated with both of the chronological horizons discussed above. A small Przeworsk cemetery (**fig. 10**) in Żerniki Wielkie (pow. wrocławski, woj. dolnośląskie/PL; formerly Groß Sürding) excavated in the 1930s produced two inhumation burials – graves 2 and 7 (Zotz 1932, 129-131). The features were dated to phase A2 based on the find assemblages. The site yielded one more inhumation burial (grave 11) of similar character but lacking grave goods. The individual deposited in grave 2 was furnished with an »inverted-pear«-shaped jug and three short specimens of Kostrzewski's C-type fibulae, very similar to the one from Siechnice (**fig. 11, 1-3**).

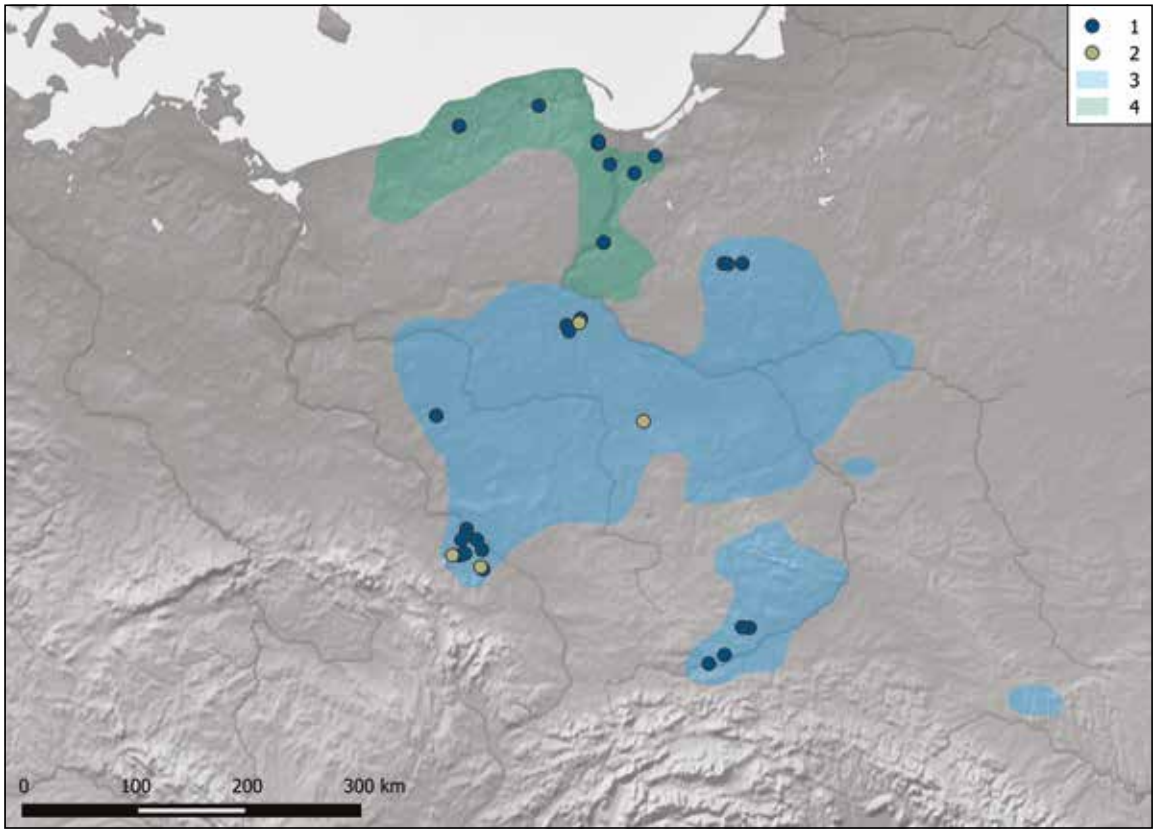

Fig. 9 Later horizon of inhumation burials recorded in the Przeworsk culture and adjacent cultural units: **1** graves from phases A3-B1. – **2** graves generally dated to the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age. – **3** Przeworsk culture. – **4** Oksywie culture. – (After Dąbrowska 1988, map 18; Margos 2000, 262-263; with additions by P. Dulęba).

In the neighbouring village of Węgry (pow. wrocławski, woj. dolnośląskie/PL; formerly Wangern), four further inhumation burials were recorded (Zotz 1932, 128-129). Two of them (graves 3 and 4) yielded finds – an iron Kostrzewski's K-type fibula, bronze two-piece belt buckles, a ceramic vessel (**fig. 12**) which might be dated to phase A2.

In Gułów (pow. strzeliński, woj. dolnośląskie/PL; formerly Gaulau) a poorly furnished inhumation burial with uncharacteristic finds generally dated to the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age was excavated (Pescheck 1939, 210). A similar dating was established for some of the burials (e. g. grave 119) from a large biritual cemetery situated in Nowa Wieś Wrocławska (pow. wrocławski; woj. dolnośląskie/PL; formerly Neudorf; Pescheck 1939, 344).

New inhumation burials associated with the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age were recorded in the course of rescue excavations at the multicultural site 15 in Wojkowice (pow. wrocławski; woj. dolnośląskie/PL; Gralak 2009). Out of three graves two (features 254 and 318) lacked grave furnishings and the third (feature 377) contained remains of an iron bracelet/armlet (which did not survive the exploration) and a long, iron fibula, probably of middle La Tène construction (Gralak 2009, 155-156 fig. 8, 1). Unfortunately, the find was not properly documented and did not receive proper conservation treatment. Although it is not possible to observe any details of its form, it might definitely be dated to a period between Lt C1 and Lt D1. The position of the deceased, who was laid on their back with the head pointing to the north, the shape of the grave pit and the presence of a bracelet/armlet are very characteristic of La Tène culture burials. Therefore, associating grave 377 with the La Tène culture seems plausible. What is more, the same site yielded a Celtic

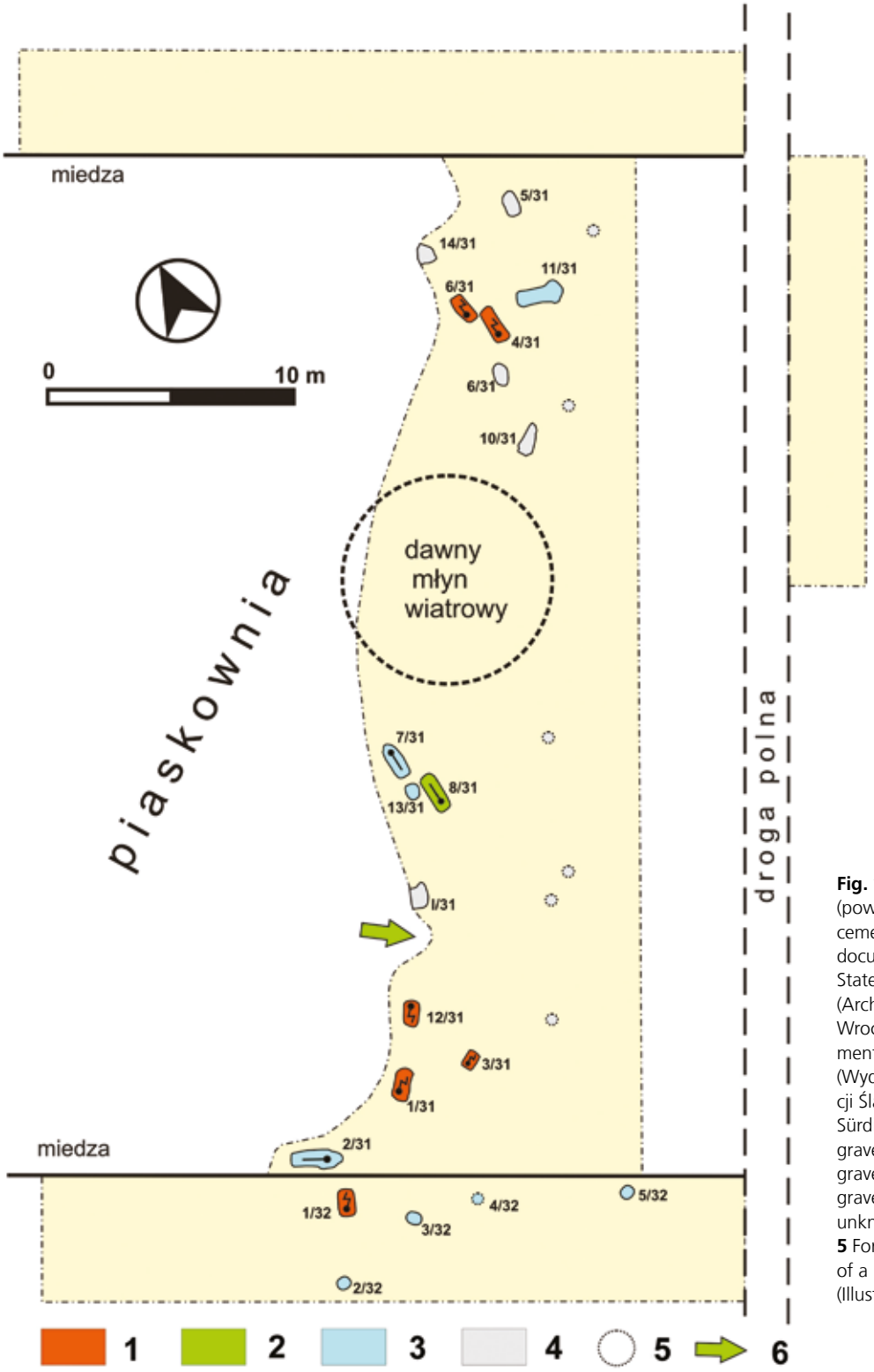

Fig. 10 Żerniki Wielkie (pow. Wrocław/PL): Plan of the cemetery (site 1), based on documentation stored in the State Archive in Wrocław (Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu), Provincial Government Department in Silesia (Wydział Samorządowy Prowincji Śląskiej), sign. 663, file Groß Sürding. – **1** Early Bronze Age graves. – **2** La Tène culture graves. – **3** Przeworsk culture graves. – **4** Features with unknown chronology. – **5** Former windmill. – **6** Place of a La Tène stray find. – (Illustration P. Dulęba).

inhumation grave (feature 522), firmly dated to the final part of the early La Tène period (Kosicki 2009). Grave 318 from Wojkowice mentioned above contained a partial burial which was dated by means of the radiocarbon method. The results obtained were rather unspecific (Gralak 2009, 158) and suggested a period corresponding with phases Lt B and C rather than with the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age.

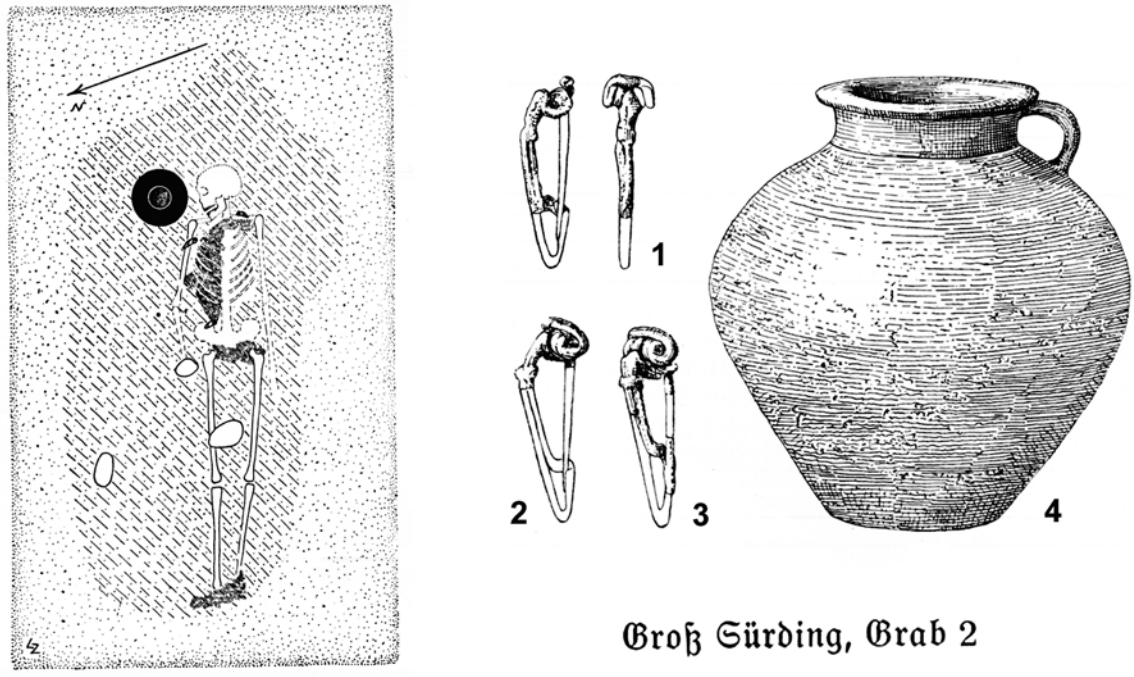

Fig. 11 Żerniki Wielkie (pow. Wrocław/PL). Grave 2. – **1-3** iron; **4** pottery. – (After Zotz 1932, 130. 132 figs 2. 5).

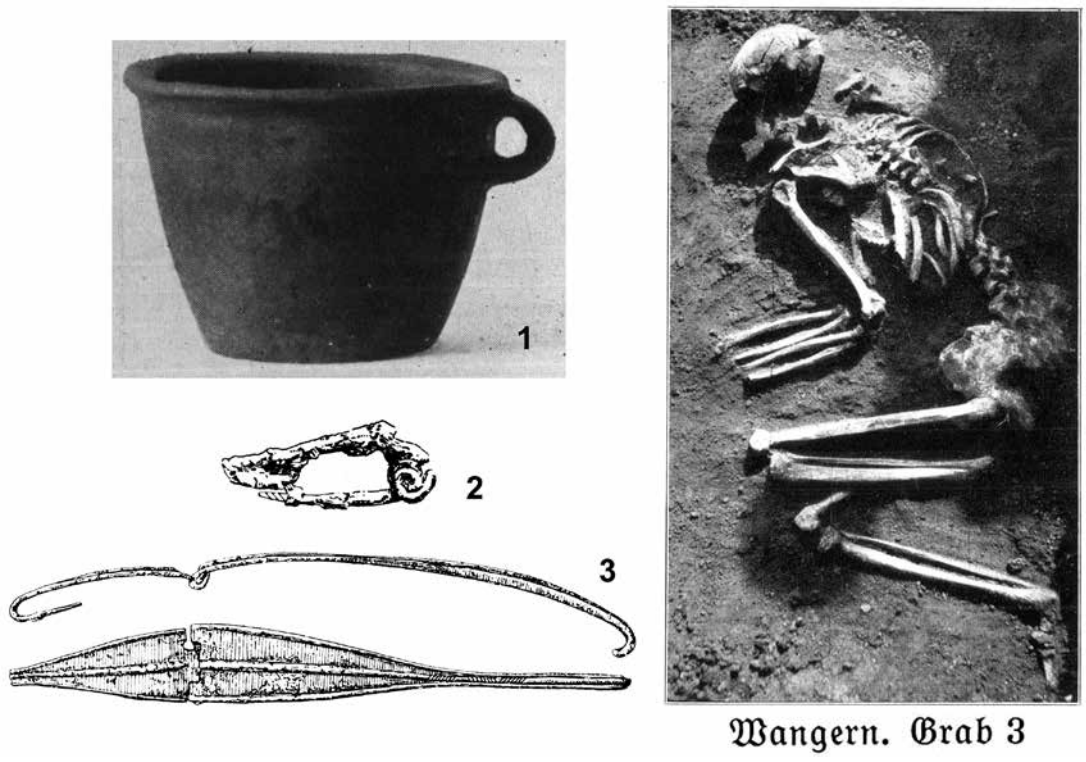

Fig. 12 Węgry (pow. Wrocław/PL). Grave 3. – **1** pottery; **2-3** iron. – (After Zotz 1932, 133 figs 6. 7, pl. X, XI, 4).

Further finds of inhumation graves shall be discussed individually, as they were all untypical burials recorded within settlement sites. In the village of Wilczków (pow. wrocławski; woj. dolnośląskie/PL; formerly Wiltschau), remains of a child and an adult were deposited in the filling of a 150 cm deep storage pit (Zotz 1932, 131-132 fig. 4). The find assemblage recovered from the pit might be dated to phase A2. A similar find was

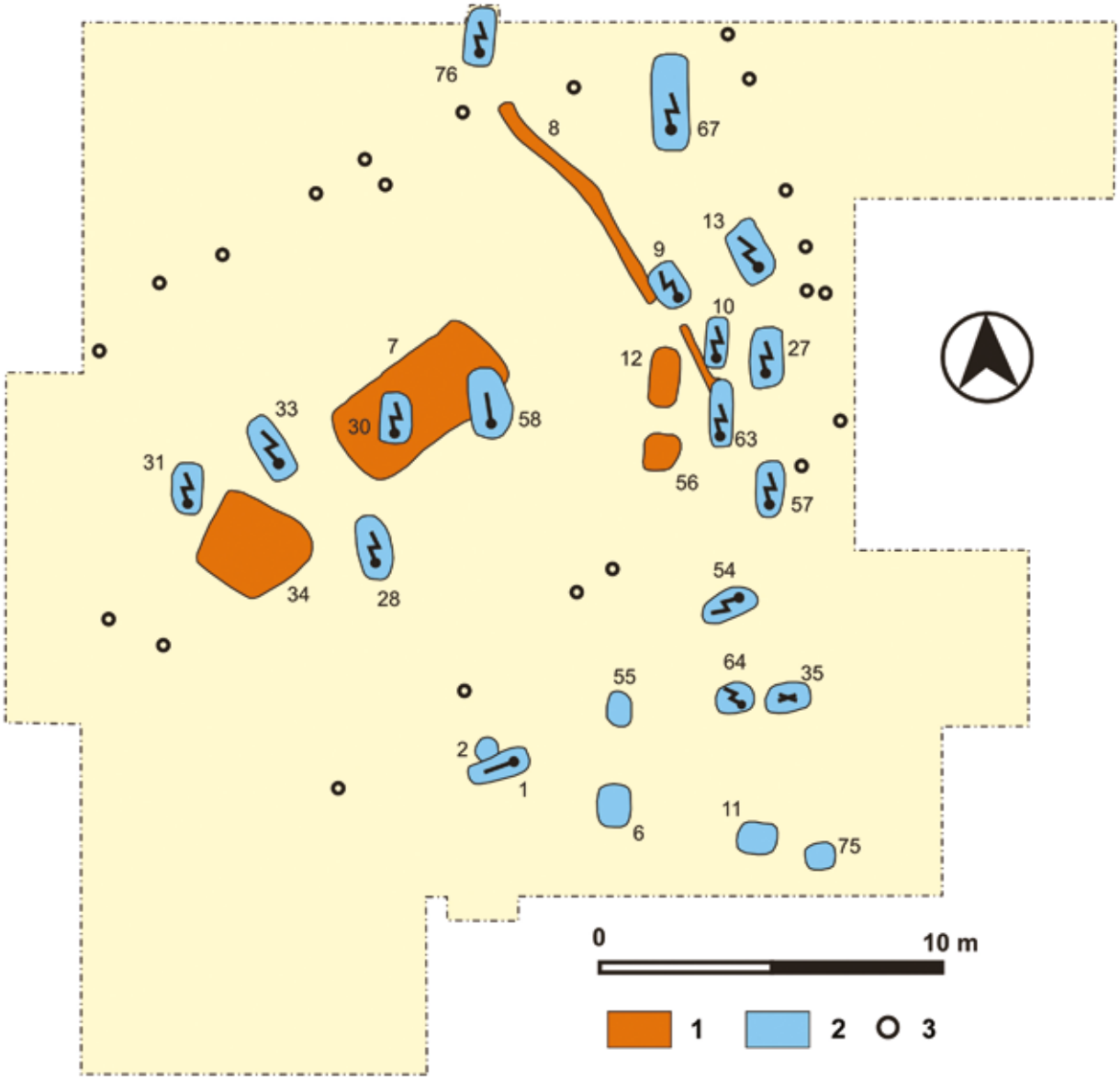

Fig. 13 Inowrocław (woj. kujawsko-pomorskie/PL). Plan of the cemetery (site 58): **1** Neolithic features. – **2** Przeworsk culture graves. – **3** post-holes. – (After Cofta-Broniewska/Bednarczyk 1998, 11. 14-15 figs 4-5; modified by P. Dulęba).

recorded in Stary Zamek (pow. wrocławski; woj. dolnośląskie/PL). On the bottom of a settlement pit (feature 1), a human skeleton lying on its side with slightly bent knees (Domański/Lodowski 1984, 38 fig. 1) came to light. The archaeological material in the filling consisted of badly fragmented pottery sherds, which might generally be dated to the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age. The cultural association of the find, however, is not certain, since a large proportion of the sherds recovered in the settlement features displayed typically Jastorf attributes.

A great diversity of the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age Przeworsk burial practices makes it difficult to select homogeneous, characteristic features of grave assemblages associated with this cultural unit. The two (**figs 13-14**) most extensive of the studied and published cemeteries dated to this period make an apt illustration of this problem. These are site 58 in Inowrocław (pow. inowrocławski, woj. kujawsko-pomorskie/PL) and site 13 in Krusza Zamkowa (pow. inowrocławski, woj. kujawsko-pomorskie/PL; Cofta-Broniewska/Bed-

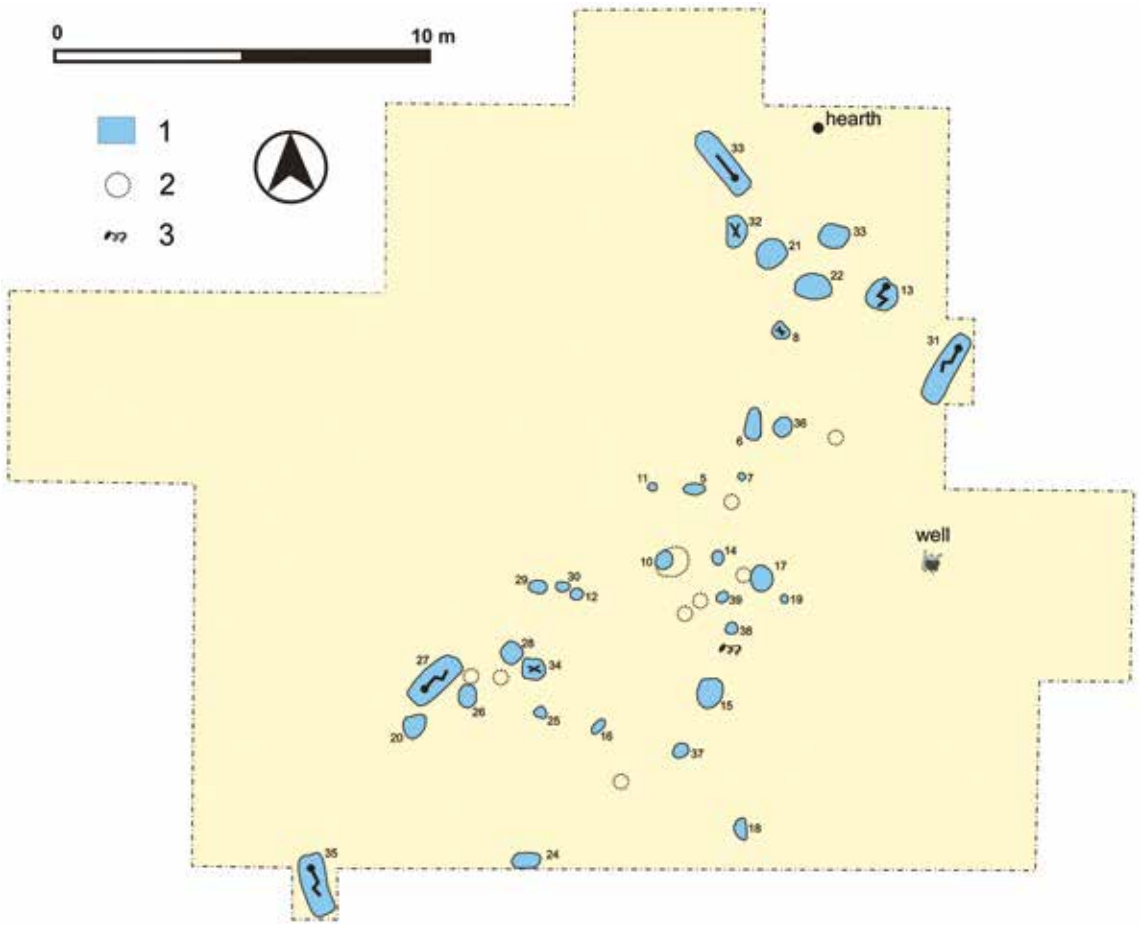

Fig. 14 Krusza Zamkowa (woj. kujawsko-pomorskie/PL). Plan of the cemetery (site 13): **1** Przeworsk culture graves. – **2** concentrations of pottery sherds. – **3** dog burial. – (After Kokowski 1991, fig. 1; modified by P. Dulęba).

narczyk 1998; Kokowski 1989; 1991), both located in Kuyavia. The cemeteries yielded burials dated to both of the chronological horizons discussed above. In most of the inhumation graves, the deceased were placed on their sides with slightly bent knees. However, individuals lying on their back or in the fetal position have also been recorded. A few partial burials have been identified. They contained most often only crania and long bones. Burial orientations varied a lot. Although bodies were usually deposited with the heads pointing to the south, the north and east orientation also occurred, as well as arranging burials along non-cardinal directions. The forms of the grave pits, even considering differences in their state of preservation, were also heterogeneous. Some of them were of considerable size, featured with a regular, quadrangular outline and slightly rounded corners. Other were irregular in shape, adjusted to the burial they contained. In this case, the deceased was often deposited with strongly bent knees. Furthermore, a number of burials with settings of irregular stones covering the grave pit was identified (Kokowski 1991, figs 18. 20). While weapons were absent from the Silesian younger Pre-Roman Iron Age inhumation burials (Niewęgłowski 1981, 40-41), the Kuyavian assemblages contained weapons, sometimes the whole sets (Margos 2000, 256)[3]. Both inhumation and cremation burials from this period yielded animal bones, which might be interpreted as remains of meat deposited in the graves. At the same time, no specific animal species seems to have been preferred (Kokowski 1991, 137; Dąbrowska 2008, 16).

Arguably, the already discussed Kuyavian inhumation burials – especially those dated to phase A3 or A3/B1 – were relatively abundant in jewellery and dress accessories (cf. Kokowski 1991, 122; Cofta-Broniewska/Bednarczyk 1998, 83-87) imported from the areas south of the Sudetes and Carpathians. Some of the scholars tend therefore to associate the specific burial custom with influences from southern Europe. This explanation has also been applied to the newer finds from western Lesser Poland. The biritual cemetery in Pełczyska (pow. pińczowski, woj. świętokrzyskie/PL), yielded an inhumation burial with exceptionally well-preserved remains of a 30-35-year-old woman. The sparse furnishings (two ceramic vessels) dated it to phase A3 (Rudnicki 2005)[4]. Based on the anthropological analysis and the untypical funerary practice, this and other similar burials were interpreted as a result of a small-scale migration from the Mediterranean (Rudnicki 2005, 200-201). In the light of the analyses presented above, the grave from Siechnice clearly does not fit into this construct.

THE ORIGIN OF THE INHUMATION BURIAL CUSTOM

It has long been maintained that the emergence of inhumation in the Przeworsk culture was associated with surviving La Tène customs (Kostrzewski 1936, 180-183; Woźniak 1970, 233; Bykowski 1976, 146-147; Błażejewski 1998, 30-31). A different opinion was expressed by T. Dąbrowska (1988, 145) who argued that only the earliest inhumation burials dated to phase A2 might be associated with the relict Celtic tradition. The spread of this practice in the Vistula zone during the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age was explained through migrations of the descendants of Celtic settlers who were already assimilated with the Przeworsk majority (Kostrzewski 1936, 180-183; Woźniak 1970, 233). In the light of the present state-of-the-art, this hypothesis has no longer any explanatory power.

The youngest La Tène culture graves from the Vistula zone were dated to Lt C1 and were predominantly cremation burials. Although both cremation and inhumation were practised throughout the whole existence of the La Tène culture, with time the former clearly became more common, especially in central Europe (Bujna 2004). At the beginning of Lt C2 an archaeologically undetectable burial custom overtook. The Celtic impact on the Przeworsk culture seems to have concerned first and foremost the cremation ritual.

Interesting cremation burials were identified in the youngest Moravian horizon of Celtic cemeteries. The phenomenon might be well illustrated by the site of Ponětovice (okr. Brno-venkov/CZ; Čižmářová 2011, 131-147 pls 17, 6; 18). The burials recorded there resembled very much the earliest Przeworsk culture graves in terms of their shapes and assemblages they contained. The grave goods seemed to have been burnt in funeral pyres in very high temperatures, the number of vessels was substantial and clearly greater than in the previous chronological horizons and the weapons were ritually destroyed. All of these customs occurred later in the Przeworsk culture. Interestingly, a firm majority of Lt C1 male burials containing weapons from the Carpathian Basin were cremation burials (Bujna 2004, 325 fig. 1).

The simultaneous presence of cremation and inhumation clearly featured the La Tène culture sepulchral sites in southern Poland. Graves dated to the middle La Tène period were few and recorded exclusively in western Lesser Poland. All of them were cremation burials (e. g. two graves from Iwanowice, pow. Miechów/PL; isolated graves from Aleksandrowice, pow. krakowski, woj. małopolskie/PL, and Łętowice, pow. tarnowski, woj. małopolskie/PL)[5]. In the early La Tène period, cremation was also a dominant funerary practice in Upper Silesia (Mangel 2009, 32-33 fig. 7) and was relatively common in Moravia (Čižmář 2012, 121-123).

The character of the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age inhumation burials analysed here clearly differed from their central European Celtic counterparts. The La Tène culture inhumation graves only exceptionally devi-

ated from the »standard« pattern, in which the deceased were deposited on their back in a regularly shaped, rectangular pit, sometimes in tree trunk coffins, with their heads pointing to the north (in Silesia, Moravia and Bohemia) or to the south (in the Carpathian Basin). Burials in which the bodies were deposited lying on their sides with bent knees were extremely rare in the La Tène environment (Waldhauser 2001, 89; Čižmářová 2004, 42-43. 92-93). Meat offerings seem also to have been more conventionalised, as Celtic graves yielded most often pig bones. This stands in apparent contrast to the Przeworsk culture, where various animal species were used.

CONCLUSIONS

The inhumation burial found in Siechnice contained remains of an adult male who died in a relatively good biological condition. Although anthropological data available for the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age are rather scarce, it might be stated that the man from Siechnice did not substantially differ from an average individual inhabiting the Barbarian areas of central Europe at that time. Analyses of selected indicators of physiological stress occurring in populations from the discussed period revealed a gradual perfection of adaptation mechanisms. A similar process was observed in the developing medieval and modern sedentary populations. At the same time, they suggest that the communities under study enjoyed relatively good health and – indirectly – that their economic status was also good (Kozak-Zychman 1996; Szczurowski 1997; Dąbrowski 1998; Dąbrowski et al. 2005).

From the cultural point of view, the man from Siechnice might be characterised as a member of the local community who in his daily life utilised items quite typical of his cultural environment. The burial did not contain any indicators of an extraordinary social status. All of these facts suggest that the distinctive body treatment was owed to other factors.

As it has already been argued, there are no grounds to maintain the hypothesis that inhumation in Germanic societies of central European Barbaricum originated in Celtic tradition. One of the possibilities is that the practice emerged already within the Przeworsk culture. As far as the earliest inhumation graves dated to phase A2 are concerned, it is not possible to identify the area from which the new custom might have been adopted. According to the alternative hypothesis formulated by U. Magros, the A3 inhumation burials in Kuyavia might have emerged under the impact of the Oksywie culture (Margos 2000, 261). This hypothesis is difficult to justify considering the number, the heterogeneity and the early dating of the Kuyavian inhumation burials. It is also worth to mention that the greatest abundance of the earliest Przeworsk culture materials occurred in Kuyavia, in the adjacent part of Greater Poland and in western Masovia. It was in this area where the Przeworsk culture was formed on the Jastorf cultural background (Grygiel 2013, 43-45).

The presently available data do not allow to interpret the heterogeneity of the younger Pre-Roman Iron Age Przeworsk burial practices as an indicator of ethnic differences. The phenomenon is more likely to be associated with some ritual conditions dependant on death circumstances, as already K. Czarnecka has argued (1990, 83-91). The diversity of inhumation practices might suggest that it was the opposition cremation – inhumation which was the most important aspect of burial ritual in the eyes of Germanic Przeworsk culture societies. Other aspects of funerary practices seem to have been of secondary significance. This might possibly be associated with religious beliefs characteristic of these communities. Such beliefs might be reconstructed on the basis of the pagan tradition preserved in Scandinavia (Ellis 1943), according to which the deceased travelled either to Walhalla or to the realm of Hel depending on their earthly deeds and death circumstances.

CATALOGUE OF THE GRAVE GOODS

1. Fragment of an iron fibula; no pin and catch; spring damaged, two coils preserved. Size after reconstruction: L. preserved 4.60 cm, height c. 2 cm (**fig. 4, 1**).

2. Iron buckle, quadrangular cross-section, ring-shaped with a hook formed by bending the wire at right angles. L. 3.70 cm, ring diam. 2.10 cm, wire thickness: 0.40 cm × 0.50 cm (**fig. 4, 2**).

3. Butted iron ring made of a round wire. Ring diam. 2.30-2.40 cm, wire diam. 0.40 cm (**fig. 4, 3**).

4. Butted iron ring made of round wire. Diam. 3.10-3.20 cm, wire thickness: 0.50 cm × 0.60 cm (**fig. 4, 4**).

5. Iron ring made of a quadrangular wire. One side of the frame is thinner. Diam. 2.20 cm, wire thickness: 0.60 cm × 0.60 cm (**fig. 4, 5**).

6. Iron ring made of a quadrangular wire. Diam. c. 2.40 cm, wire thickness: 0.50 cm × 0.50 cm (**fig. 4, 6**).

7. Iron ring made of a round wire. Diam. 3.00 cm, wire thickness: 0.50 cm × 0.55 cm (**fig. 4, 7**).

8. Awl-shaped fire-steel with a quadrangular tang, which was originally inserted into a wooden handle; small piece of wood preserved. The tip used for striking diagonally cut. L. 9.10 cm, tang thickness: 0.90 cm × 0.78 cm (**fig. 4, 8**).

9. Quartzite strike-a-light stone smoothened on one of the sides and featured with characteristic grooves where the fire-steel was rubbed. Lower side unworked. Fitted to left hand with a diagonal cut for the thumb and a hollow to accommodate index finger. Dimensions: 8.50 cm × 6.40 cm × 3.80 cm (**fig. 4, 9**).

10. Iron knife with a rectangular tang (broken in the terminal part). Straight back, sharp tip. Wood remains preserved on the tang, which had probably been inserted into a wooden handle. Preserved length 11.40 cm, blade length 8.80 cm, blade width 2.15 cm, thickness 0.40 cm, tang thickness: 0.50 cm × 1.00 cm (**fig. 4, 10**).

11. Black-brownish, hand-made jug with a thickened rim and a handle located in the upper part of the vessel. Clay body tempered with mineral temper. Engraved ornament. Size after reconstruction: height 15.40-16.30 cm, rim diam. 12.10 cm, bottom diam. 12.10 cm, diam. of the widest part of the body 15.70 cm (**fig. 4, 11**).

12. Cup with a thickened, facetted rim and a handle located immediately below the rim, where the body was at its widest. Hand-made; clay body tempered with mineral temper and burnished black-brownish. Size after reconstruction: height 11.40-12.10 cm, rim diam. 13.50 cm, bottom diam. 8.80 cm (**fig. 4, 12**).

13. 47 Lusatian pottery sherds (secondarily deposited).

14. 5 cattle bones (*Bos taurus*) of a less than 3 years old individual: right *os femoris*, upper right *os coxae*, tooth fragment, right *radius*, non-diagnostic skull fragment, bone chips.

Notes

1) Unpublished rescue excavations by Katarzyna Kopeć-Żygadło. The materials are available in the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology Polish Academy of Science (Instytut Archeologii i Etnologii Polskiej Akadem ii Nauk).

2) The excavations were conducted by a research group led by Paweł Konczewski.

3) The inhumation grave with a set of weapons dated to phase A2 was found within an unpublished burial site in Miechowice (pow. włocławski, woj. śląskie/PL); pers. comm. Michał Grygiel.

4) The excavations in Pełczyska produced three further younger Pre-Roman Iron Age inhumation burials (features 25/05, 5/08 and 8/11), which have not been analysed yet.

5) All of the Silesian burials mentioned here, which had been associated with the middle La Tène period (e. g. graves from Głownin, pow. strzeliński, woj. dolnośląskie/PL, and grave 1752 from Kietrz, pow. Głubczycki, woj. opolskie/PL) might be dated to the final stage of phase Lt B2.

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Zusammenfassung / Summary / Résumé

Eine Körperbestattung der Przeworsk-Kultur aus Siechnice (Niederschlesien)
und die Frage der gemischten Bestattungspraxis in der vorrömischen Eisenzeit

Während Notgrabungen an einem multikulturellen Fundplatz in Siechnice (pow. Wrocław/PL) wurde ein isoliert liegendes Grab der jüngeren vorrömischen Przeworsk-Kultur entdeckt. Es barg die gut erhaltenen Reste eines ca. 30/35-jährigen Mannes. Ausweislich des Beigabenensembles stammt das Grab von der Wende des 2. zum 1. Jahrhundert v. Chr. Diese Datierung würde es zu einem der ältesten Fundkomplexe der Przeworsk-Kultur im südlichen Teil von Niederschlesien machen. Zu dieser Zeit herrschte in den germanischen Kulturen die Brandgrabsitte vor. Nur aus Niederschlesien, Kujawien und dem Westen Kleinpolens ist eine kleine Anzahl von Fundorten mit Körperbestattungen bekannt. Sie wurden lange Zeit dem Einfluss der Latènekultur auf die einheimische Bevölkerung zugeschrieben. Die Verfasser dieses Artikels argumentieren allerdings, dass sich untypische Bestattungssitten auch mit anderen Faktoren als mit ethnischen erklären lassen. Die naturwissenschaftliche Analyse des Bestatteten von Siechnice zeigte, dass er lokaler Herkunft war und in relativ gutem körperlichem Zustand verstarb. Ebenso waren die Fundstücke aus diesem Grab typisch für die Przeworsk-Kultur. Übersetzung: M. Struck

A Przeworsk Culture Inhumation Burial from Siechnice (Lower Silesia)
and the Question of Biritualism in the Pre-Roman Iron Age

In the course of rescue excavations at a multicultural site in Siechnice (pow. Wrocław/PL), an isolated younger Pre-Roman Iron Age Przeworsk culture burial was recorded. It contained well-preserved remains of a c. 30/35-year-old male individual. The assemblage of grave furnishings suggested that the burial dates to the turn of the 2nd and the 1st century BC. This would make it one of the oldest Przeworsk culture assemblages recorded in the southern part of Lower Silesia. At that time, cremation clearly dominated over inhumation in the Germanic cultures. It was only in Lower Silesia, Kuyavia and western Lesser Poland, where a small number of sites with inhumation burials was found. The presence of those has long been interpreted as a result of the La Tène culture impact on the indigenous communities. However, the authors of this paper argue that untypical funerary practices might be explained by factors other than ethnicity. The scientific analyses of the individual buried in the Siechnice grave demonstrated that he was of local origin and died in a relatively good biological condition. Also, the artefacts recorded in this burial were typical of Przeworsk culture.

L'inhumation de la culture de Przeworsk à Siechnice (Basse-Silésie)
et la question du biritualisme à l'âge du Fer pré-romain

Dans le cadre de fouilles de sauvetage sur un site multiphasé à Siechnice (pow. Wrocław/PL) une inhumation du début de la culture pré-romaine de l'âge du Fer de Przeworsk a été fouillée. Elle contenait les restes bien conservés d'un homme d'environ 30/35 ans. L'assemblage de mobilier funéraire suggère que l'inhumation remonte au tournant du IIe et du Ier siècle av. J.-C. Cela en ferait l'un des plus anciens ensembles culturels de Przeworsk enregistrés dans la partie sud de la Basse-Silésie. A cette époque, la crémation dominait clairement l'inhumation dans les cultures germaniques. Ce n'est qu'en Basse-Silésie, en Kuyavie et dans l'ouest de la Petite Pologne que l'on a retrouvé un petit nombre d'inhumations. La présence de ces dernières a longtemps été interprétée comme le résultat de l'impact culturel de La Tène sur les communautés indigènes. Toutefois, les auteurs de l'article soutiennent que les pratiques funéraires atypiques peuvent s'expliquer par des facteurs autres que l'origine ethnique. Les analyses scientifiques de l'individu enterré dans la tombe de Siechnice ont démontré qu'il était d'origine locale et qu'il est mort dans un état biologique relativement bon. Les artefacts enregistrés dans cette sépulture étaient également typiques de la culture de Przeworsk. Traduction: L. Bernard

Schlüsselwörter / Keywords / Mots clés

Polen / Schlesien / vorrömische Eisenzeit / Przeworsk-Kultur / Körperbestattungen / gemischte Bestattungssitte
Poland / Silesia / Pre-Roman Iron Age / Przeworsk culture / inhumation burials / biritualism
Pologne / Silésie / âge du Fer pré-romain / culture de Przeworsk / tombe à inhumation / biritualisme

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