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Funeral practices in the Bronze and Early Iron Ages in south-western Poland with regard to social changes*

By Bogusław Gediga (†) and Anna Józefowska

Keywords: Bronze Age / Hallstatt period / Lusatian Culture / Silesia / funeral practices / chamber graves

Schlagwörter: Bronzezeit / Hallstattzeit / Lausitzer Kultur / Schlesien / Bestattungspraktiken / Kammergräber

Mots-clés: âge du Bronze / période de Hallstatt / Culture de Lusace / Silésie / pratiques funéraire / tombes à chambre

Introduction

Funeral rites are one of the most important determinants of cultures and at the same time an important element of culture itself, also in prehistoric societies. Activities performed with bodies after death are aimed at commemorating the dead and remembering them, but they also reflect the relationship between the deceased and the community¹. Burial customs are a set of established rituals in the form of activities that are performed after the death of a member of a given community, associated with a whole range of cult and magical procedures that have left no material relics². The practices related to the way the body is treated after death determine the existence a burial. A broader understanding of this term covers issues associated with activities performed from the moment of death up to ritual practices arising from shaped images in the sphere of the cult of the dead. Archaeological sources that refer to particular stages of funeral ceremonies are limited, and we are often unable to interpret them properly.

This study concerns the funerary customs practiced by communities inhabiting the territory of south-western Poland in what is traditionally defined as the Lusatian Urnfield Culture. Our considerations are based on the data obtained during the excavations of the vast cemetery in Domaśław/Chrzanów, Wrocław district, in use from Period III of the Bronze Age (BD, HA) to the Early Iron Age (HD1 and HD3)³. Thanks to the discovery of numerous and variously furnished graves, the cemetery in Domaśław became a source for research not only on funeral rites, but also on various aspects of culture. The purpose of this article is to discuss the burial practices at this site and their changes over time, and the role and significance of external influences in the transformation of the local community. The main focus is on changes in funeral rite, inspired by the influences of the Mediterranean civilisation and the Hallstatt culture. Concentration of elements of the Hallstatt style testifies to the advanced, long-distance connections and constant exchange of ideas and luxury goods, as well as inspirations flowing

* This article is based on the monograph on the cemetery in Domaśław/Chrzanów published by the authors (GEDIGA/JÓZEFOWSKA 2019).

¹ GEDIGA 1967, 320; RENFREW/BAHN 2003, 394; WOŹNY 2005, 7.

² SZYDŁOWSKI 1964, 13; GEDIGA 1979, 336.

³ ANIOŁA et al. 2012; GEDIGA/JÓZEFOWSKA 2018a; 2018b; 2018c; 2019; GEDIGA et al. 2020; DOLATA-DASZKIEWICZ et al. 2022; ZARZYCKA-ANIOŁA et al. 2022a; 2022b.



Fig. 1. The Hallstatt culture in Europe.

from the environment of the Hallstatt elites. In the light of our findings, an attempt is made to reconsider the processes of ‘Hallstattisation’ taking place in the Silesian group of Lusatian urnfields; it seems justified to scrutinise the idea that the area of Silesia, parts of Greater Poland and perhaps also of Kuyavia should be treated as a regional, north-eastern province of the Hallstatt culture (*Fig. 1*)⁴. The changes occurring in time and space, observed in the material from Domasław, are a reference point for correlating the features distinguished at this cemetery with other sites in the immediate vicinity (south-western Poland – Upper and Lower Silesia, south-western part of Greater Poland) and more distant areas, such as Germany, Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia.

The state of research on the funeral rite

The issues regarding burial rites in the Urnfield cultures and in particular the circle of the Lusatian Urnfield Culture and of the Hallstatt culture, have a very rich, but mainly one-sided literature. A general division of the existing literature can be limited to several groups.

The first group consists of synthetic works on prehistory of selected regions or larger areas of Europe. In the case of Poland, these are primarily the standard first works by Włodzimierz Antoniewicz and Józef Olszewski⁵. In these synthetic works, burial rites are reduced to formal descriptions of burial complexes, and they have shaped such understanding of the rite for many

⁴ GEDIGA 2007a, 4; 2007b, 124; 2008, 170; 2010, 18–218.

⁵ KOSTRZEWSKI 1913; ANTONIEWICZ 1928; KOSTRZEWSKI 1939–48; 1949; KOSTRZEWSKI et al. 1965.

years. When it comes to the synthesis of the prehistory of Poland and neighbouring areas, the work by Tadeusz Sulimirski should be mentioned⁶. From more recent years, the five-volume synthesis *Prahistoria ziem polskich/Prehistory of Poland* published by the Institute of the History of Material Culture of the Polish Academy of Sciences (today the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences), should be recalled, in which there is a clear focus on historical synthesis and a departure from traditional models. In this spirit, volumes 3 and 4 present the elements of symbolic culture of the Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age⁷. A similar trend is maintained in the synthesis by Witold Hensel⁸. In 2017, another publication in English was released, intended to be a synthesis of the prehistory of Poland⁹.

Syntheses of the prehistory of neighbouring countries, that are of the most interest to us due to their territorial proximity and, to a large extent, an analogous course of cultural changes, constitute a valuable source of information, and often also hypotheses and interpretations. It is necessary to recall the work by Jan Filip *Pradzieje Czechostowacji/Prehistory of Czechoslovakia*, also available to Polish archaeology thanks to the translation by J. Kostrzewski presented in 1951¹⁰. The most recent syntheses, published in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, are valuable for the current development of the research on changes in burial rites in the Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age¹¹. In this group, the monograph of the Lusatian culture by Jan Dąbrowski and university textbooks by Marek Gedl on the Lusatian culture and on Europe of the Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age should also be mentioned¹².

The issues of social transformation in the Hallstatt Period, especially formation of the elites, were also discussed in a collective publication on “Connecting Elites and Regions” during the Early Iron Age Hallstatt C period in Northwest and Central Europe¹³. It was an aftermath of an international conference that was held in Leiden in 2015 (under the same title). The authors of the monograph discuss changes in social structure in two selected regions of Europe that are most clearly visible in burial rites, i. e., in graves with elaborate construction and exceptionally rich grave goods, including imports. In the next part, known graves of that type, usually referred to as “princely graves”, from particular regions are presented. The rather original scope of the term Central Europe adopted by the organisers did not include the area of Poland, even though Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia were considered. The Authors from those neighbouring countries, somewhat traditionally, also failed to notice and refer to analogous transformations, already mentioned in publications, taking place in the area of Poland in the Hallstatt Period.

The second group of publications, in which relatively more attention was also devoted to the issues associated with burial rites, are regional monographs of the Lusatian Urnfield culture and, more broadly, of the circles of the Urnfield and the Hallstatt cultures. In our case, the closest are the monographs of regions of Silesia by Zdzisław Durczewski, M. Gedl, Bogusław Gediga, and the one concerning the area of the border of Silesia and Greater Poland by Irena Lasak¹⁴. From the area of Greater Poland, two monographs, by Maciej Kaczmarek and Krzysztof Szamałek, also contain extensive characteristics of cemeteries and burial complexes along

⁶ SULIMIRSKI 1955; 1959.

⁷ GARDAWSKI/KOWALCZYK 1978; DĄBROWSKI/RAJEWSKI 1979.

⁸ HENSEL 1988.

⁹ URBAŃCZYK/BUGAJ 2017.

¹⁰ FILIP 1951, s. 225–295.

¹¹ PLEINER/RYBOVÁ 1978, 422–431; 461–481; 503–532; PODBORSKÝ 1993, 293–295; 315–316; 331–332; 346–351; 356–359; JIRÁŇ 2008,

225–235; VENČLOVÁ 2008, 93–97, 137–144; FURMÁNEK et al. 2015, 268–271.

¹² GEDL 1975, 83–92; 1985; DĄBROWSKI 2009, 215–221.

¹³ SCHUMANN/VAN DER VAART-VERSCHOOF 2017.

¹⁴ Regions of Silesia: DURCZEWSKI 1946, 9–30; 1948; GEDL 1962, 142–152; GEDIGA 1967, 243–248. – Area of the border of Silesia and Greater Poland: LASAK 2001, 290–365.

with suggestions of interpretation¹⁵. From the monographic studies of the Lusatian Urnfield culture of the nearest regions, in which the Authors also discuss burial rites in general, the following ones are worth mentioning: works by Jiří Juchelka, Vit Dohnal, the monograph of the Lusatian culture in Slovakia by Ladislav Veličačik, of the Białowice- (Billendorf-) group by Dietmar-Wilfried R. Buck and of the regional Górzycza group by Siegfried Griesa, as well as the monograph of Alexander Gramsch¹⁶.

Source monographs of excavated cemeteries are another group of published works, which unfortunately usually contain only formal descriptions of a cemetery itself and graves, without broader interpretations in the aspect of burial rites. There are many such published monographs. We will limit ourselves to name only a few publications from the closest regions with a similar rhythm of cultural changes, bringing the widest range of comparative sources. It is primarily the cemetery in Kietrz, Głubczyce district¹⁷, and from Lower Silesia – in Niesułowice and in Cieszków, Milicz district¹⁸. Burial rites were discussed in a more detailed way in the monograph of the settlement complex in Maciejowice, Garwolin district¹⁹.

From the neighbouring areas, we have catalogues of Hallstatt cemeteries from the northern part of the Czech Republic with a concise description of burial rites and the monographs of the cemeteries in Ostroměř and Čáslav – u Stínadel²⁰. A catalogue of graves from Moravičany, valuable due to the wide scope of research on the cemetery, was published by Jindra Nekvasil²¹. From Germany, important source materials for our subject there have been made available for scientific circulation from the cemeteries in Niederkaina near Bautzen, in Tornow, Kr. Calau and in Klein Lieskow in Lower Lusatia²².

Papers and larger monographs devoted to the broadly understood symbolic culture are the next, already third group of works published so far. They are of the most direct interest to us due to the attempt made to show the transformation of burial rite. Among these works, a significant achievement was the monograph by Tadeusz Malinowski from 1962.

In the early post-war years in Poland, especially after some ideological and political liberalisation since the mid-1950s, archaeologists joined in publications on the history of religion. These are works representing diverse ideological and methodological approaches, and they contain outlined presentations and interpretations of burial rites in the Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age. This section includes mainly works by W. Antoniewicz, Włodzimierz Szafrąński and B. Gediga²³. Gediga devoted several papers to selected cases related to burial rites but treated rather as a characteristic of formal features²⁴. Jacek Woźny took up important issues in his works, such as the symbolism of burial places and the rebirth of the dead²⁵. Recognised

¹⁵ KACZMAREK 2002, 240–263; SZAMAŁEK 2009, 134–141.

¹⁶ DOHNAL 1974, 17–21; 1977; BUCK 1979, 95–102; GRIESA 1982, 24–27; VELIČAČIK 1983, 151–162; GRAMSCH 2010; JUCHELKA 2014.

¹⁷ GEDL 2002b, 10; 75–116; further literature there.

¹⁸ Niesułowice: DOMAŃSKA/LASAK 1997, 149–153. – Cieszków: DOMAŃSKA 1973, 133–207; DOMAŃSKA/GOŁUBKOW 1975, 79–139; 1976, 77–119; 1977, 103–149; 1978, 49–86; 1979, 33–66.

¹⁹ MOGIELNICKA-URBAN 2014.

²⁰ VOKOLEK 1999a, 6. – Ostroměř: VOKOLEK 1999b, 11–18. – Čáslav – u Stínadel: ŠUMBEROVÁ et al. 2021.

²¹ NEKVASIL 1982.

²² Niederkaina: COBLENZ/NEBELSICK 1997a; 1997b; HEYD 1998; 2000; NEBELSICK 2001; HEYD 2002; KAISER 2003; PUTTKAMMER 2003; HOPPEL/JANSEN 2007; PUTTKAMMER 2008; GUHL 2020; MANSCHUS/SCHMIDT 2021; 2022. – Tornow: BREDDIN 1989, 112–119; 1992. – Klein Lieskow: BUCK/BUCK 2010; 2011.

²³ ANTONIEWICZ 1957, 323–332; SZAFRĄŃSKI 1964, 478–482; 1971, 173–236; GEDIGA 1976, 77–183; SZAFRĄŃSKI 1979, 109–147; 1987; GEDIGA 1989, 211–217.

²⁴ GEDL 1964; 1984.

²⁵ WOŹNY 2000; 2005.

sources from cemeteries have become the basis for studies on ceremonial feasts and reflections on prehistoric anthropology of death²⁶. In several papers, the Authors took up various selected issues associated with burial rites, among others Cezary Buśko, Jan Dąbrowski and Małgorzata Mogielnicka-Urban²⁷. Some papers devoted to the topics connected with burial rites in the Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age can be found among references in publications of the authors cited above, as well as in the latest syntheses of the prehistory of the Czech Republic, Moravia and Slovakia. The paper by Drahomír Koutecký, in which the author presented the interpretation of rich chamber graves of the Bylany culture, deserves special mention²⁸. Burial rites of the Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age were extensively presented and interpreted in the monumental work by Vladimír Podborský from 2006, *Náboženství pravěkých Evropanů*²⁹.

Characteristics of the cemetery in Domasław

The problem of changes in burial rites during the time of the Urnfield culture and the Early Iron Age, which took place mainly under the influence of the Mediterranean civilisation and the Hallstatt culture, is prompted by the sensational results – not only on the scale of Polish lands – of the large-scale excavations conducted on the vast burial ground in Domasław in Lower Silesia³⁰.

Domasław/Chrzanów is located about 20 km south-west of Wrocław, in Kobierzyce commune (*Fig. 1*) on the Wrocław Plain, which stretches between the Wrocław Valley and the Sudetes Foreland, and which is part of the physical and geographical mesoregion of the Silesian Lowland. The area is almost devoid of forest cover and has an agricultural character. The surface is mostly flat, slightly wavy and partly hilly. The region of the site stands out clearly from the local landscape. It is a post-glacial plateau of the Oder glaciation extending into the watershed of Ślęza and Bystrzyca rivers. This elevation is limited from the north and south by two small valleys of nameless streams being tributaries of the Ślęza river. The fertile soils and the extensive river network created favourable conditions for life and economy, hence these areas are now almost entirely used for agriculture, and in prehistory were the central point of settlement in Lower Silesia.

The site was first excavated by German archaeologists in 1929, when 20 graves from Bronze Age IV–V were explored, which had been identified during construction works³¹. Rescue excavations commissioned by the General Directorate for National Roads and Motorways were conducted from July 2006 to September 2008 by the teams of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences from Wrocław and Kraków under the supervision of Professors Bogusław Gediga and Sławomir Kadrow. On the area of about three hectares, more than 2500 features were discovered related to the huge burial ground associated with the circle of the Urnfield cultures. Part of the northern border of the cemetery was not investigated because it was outside the investment area.

The cemetery in Domasław, associated with the Lusatian Urnfield culture, began its functioning in the oldest phase of the formation of this archaeological culture. The beginnings of

²⁶ MIERZWIŃSKI 2012a; 2012b; NEBELSICK 2016.

²⁷ BUŚKO 1987; DĄBROWSKI 2013; MOGIELNICKA-URBAN 2000.

²⁸ KOUTECKÝ 1968.

²⁹ PODBORSKÝ 2006.

³⁰ GEDIGA 2007a; 2007b; 2011; 2013; GEDIGA/JÓZEFOWSKA 2018a; 2018b; 2018c; 2019; GEDIGA et al. 2020; DOLATA-DASZKIEWICZ et al. 2022; ZARZYCKA-ANIOLA et al. 2022a; 2022b.

³¹ GEDIGA 1967, 379 fig.39, further literature there.

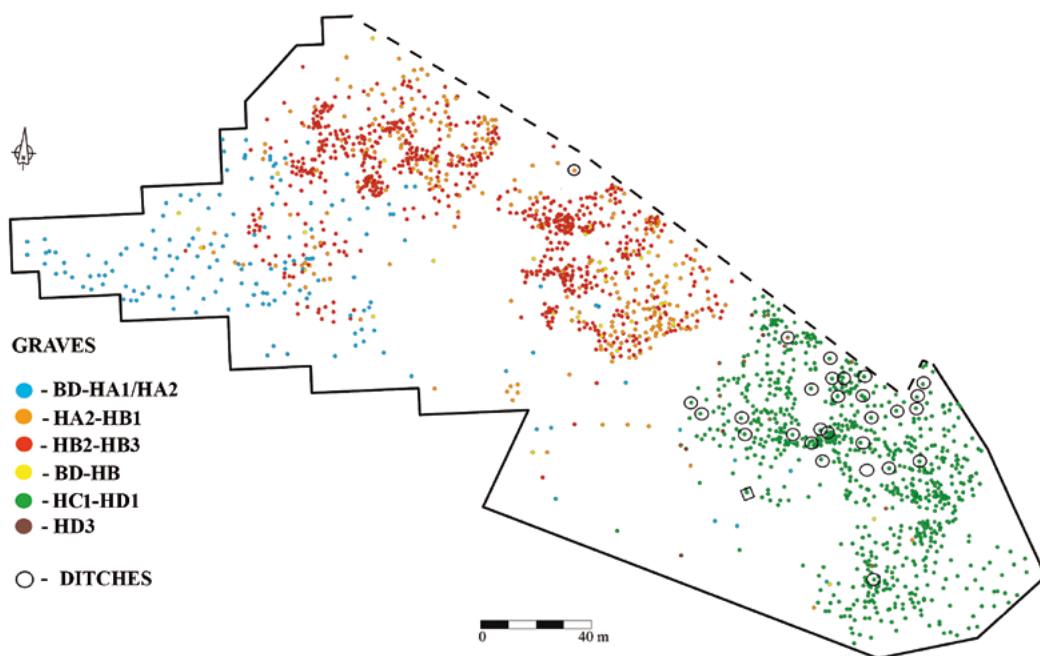


Fig. 2. Plan of the graves at the cemetery in Domasław/Chrzanów, divided into chronological phases.

the cemetery are represented by complexes with developed tuber ceramics that fit in Period III of the Bronze Age according to the commonly used Montelius / Kostrzewski chronological system³², and in the BD–HA1 periods according to the southern periodisation by Paul Reinecke (1300/1250 BC). A small number of assemblages represent a slightly older phase, i. e. the period of the Tumulus cultures and the early Urnfield cultures, distinguished by Hermann Müller-Karpe and adopted by Gernot Jacob-Friesen, falling at the beginning of the BD period, and perhaps even still BC2, which in absolute dates would be from about 1350 to 1300 BC³³. The declining phase of use of the cemetery is the HD1 period, i. e. around 550 BC. Also, the end of use is exceeded by several assemblages entering HD3 and the La Tène A–B period.

The period of use can be divided into four phases (*Fig. 2*). The first phase (Period III of the Bronze Age – the beginning of Period IV; BD–HA1, HA1 / A2) was synchronised with the already developed stage of the Lusatian culture in Lower Silesia³⁴, the second (Period IV–V; HA2–HB3) is characterised by a stable image of burial rites, the third – dated to the Early Iron Age (HC1–D1) is distinguished by significant changes in the funeral rite as a result of Hallstatt influences. Few graves from the HD3 period were also discovered (Phase IV), but this phase may be partially unrecognised. The results of the radiocarbon analyses in comparison with the current dating of the individual periods of the Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age mostly fall within parts of the time intervals determined for these periods³⁵. They correspond to the time sequence established on the basis of stylistic and typological analyses.

The cemetery in Domasław was located on one of the hilltops of a quite significant elevation, gently sloping south. The main axis of the cemetery from the first phase was marked

³² KOSTRZEWSKI et al. 1965, 120–122; DĄBROWSKI / RAJEWSKI 1979; GEDIGA 1982, 49–56; DĄBROWSKI 2009, 17 tab. 1.

³³ JACOB-FRIESEN 1973, 644.

³⁴ GEDIGA 1982, 55; tab. 1.

³⁵ GEDIGA 2019; GOSLAR 2019.

out by supposed burial mounds arranged in several rows along a north-west – south-east line, around which other burials were placed. Most of the graves were discovered in the south-western part of the site, not used in later periods. Graves from the HA1 / A2 period were discovered in the northern and eastern parts of the cemetery from the first phase, and several flat features from the HA2 period in the eastern, south-eastern and northern parts of the area used during the Bronze Age, between older graves. A ditch surrounding a grave from the HA2 period was discovered. Isolated features from the HB1 period began the next stage of the cemetery development, this time having a continuous character. Graves from the HB1, HB1 / B2 period were situated between older graves, again on a hill used in the first phase, with the exception of the southern and south-western zones. Above all, the cemetery space was expanded to the north, and its boundaries were probably delimited by the construction of large burial mounds. Numerous features from the HB2 and HB3 periods were discovered in the part of the site outlined by the graves from the beginning of the second phase in the north-eastern sections and in the central part of the cemetery. At that time, there were few barrow graves, which in the earlier period formed the basis of the cemetery. An even larger concentration of graves in a limited space was characteristic of burials from the end of the second phase. In the eastern and south-eastern part, almost exclusively burials dated to the third phase have been discovered (*Fig. 2*). Graves were constructed in high density, especially in the northern part. Chamber graves were evenly located among graves without internal constructions. Barrows are suspected to exist on at least some of them, because empty, circular spaces, not occupied by other graves, have been recorded around them. Features surrounded by circular ditches were discovered in the western and central part of the cemetery. In the marshy central-southern zone of the burial ground, used during the Hallstatt period, graves were singly built in all phases of the cemetery, both in the oldest as well as in the youngest. It seems that this part closed the cemetery naturally from this side. Few features from the HD3 period, which were associated with new population groups or with returns of the community to the site, appeared between the graves dated to HC³⁶.

The people who buried their dead at the cemetery in Domasław used only cremation. There were no traces of burial pyres at the site, which could have been located in the unexcavated northern part of the necropolis or in the zone between the cemeteries used in the Bronze Age and the Hallstatt period with a hiatus in burying the dead. This area was covered with a thick, black layer containing pottery material mostly from HB–HC periods. Below this layer, numerous features were discovered that could have been part of one construction, filled with heavily burned fragments of household vessels dated to the second and beginning of the third phase.

About 2000 graves were discovered and explored as well as 400 features that we addressed as pottery deposits – probably partly consisting of damaged burials, but mostly of symbolic character. In the area of the site, there were no noticeable remains of barrows, but the lack of damages of older burials for such a long period when the cemetery was occupied must testify not only to the continuity of memory of the communities using it, but also to the marking of graves by stones, posts, grave constructions or burial mounds. The latter can be indicated by empty spaces around some graves. At the cemetery, a complex of 29 ditched enclosures of a funerary character was also uncovered. The burials, pits and chests, were usually oriented along an east-west axis, with minor deviations, which suggests that the points of dawn and sunset were observed when the graves were built. This is a constant rule for all graves, particularly clearly visible in the cases of rectangular internal constructions.

³⁶ GEDIGA/JÓZEFOWSKA 2019, 19–24.

Chronology / Phases	Graves					Ceramic deposits
	summary	urned	unurned	“urned and unurned”	non- classified	summary
BD-HA1/A2 (I)	163	102	44	10	7	46
HA2-HB3 (II)	993	611	232	115	35	204
BD-HB3 (I-II)	41	11	21	0	9	15
HC-D1 (III)	803	605	45	84	69	133
HD3 (IV)	6	5		1	0	1
summary	2006	1334	342	210	120	399

Tab. 1. List of graves and pottery deposits according to the phases of the cemetery use and the practice of placing the bones into the burials.

Aspects of burial practices

The spectrum of burial rituals practiced in this cemetery was very wide. There were important differences in the equipment and construction between the individual graves at each stage of the usage of the necropolis³⁷. In all phases, urned burials prevailed over unurned graves (*Tab. 1*). However, in the early stages, the significance of burying the cremated remains without urns was high, as evidenced by the choice of this method in graves from the first phase, distinguished with mounds and “coffins”, as well as in half of the graves with internal wooden structure from the second phase. In the Hallstatt period the unurned burials were marginal, much “poorer” in terms of grave goods and construction.

In all periods, single urns (rarely more) were placed into grave pits. Mainly vases, but also pots or cups were used as urns. In the Hallstatt period, the share of urn-vases in chamber graves was 80%, and in graves without inner constructions 51%. About one third of the urns from the Bronze Age and almost half from the Early Iron Age, were covered with another vessel, mainly bowls, or, in the initial period, with ceramic fragments. Urns were placed centrally almost in half of graves, less often in the western and eastern parts of pits. In the case of multiple urn burials, no rules were noticed in the arrangement. In the graves with wooden constructions, urns were placed mainly in the western part. In the Hallstatt chamber graves, the urns were located almost exclusively in the western part, also in multiple urn burials. In the case of the most sumptuous graves, subsequent urns were added in the eastern parts.

In the Bronze Age, cremated remains deposited directly in the pits were most often scattered evenly, also within internal constructions. In the second phase, only exceptionally they were placed in zones or in burnt layers on the floor of the pits. In some of the graves the chests were covered from the outside with remnants of a pyre, mainly from the west side. In the third phase, the “urnless rite” was used incidentally, and sometimes some of the bones were recovered from the fillings of the pits or found in dense clusters; thus, originally they had been packed

³⁷ GEDIGA/JÓZEFOWSKA 2019.

in a non-preserved urn. In the case of several chamber features without urns it seems that for some reasons the deceased was not buried inside chests.

Anthropological analyses show a large variety of treating the remains of the dead. In the first phase, it can be stated that in 13.5% of graves several individuals were buried, mostly in separate containers. In the second phase, in 11.5% of burials the remains of two to three individuals, mainly adults and children, were placed together. In at least 10% of graves from the third phase, more than one individual was buried. The weight of bones put into graves varies greatly, from a few grams to over 2 kg. Probably the *pars pro toto* principle was enough to implement the idea of a burial. In up to 10% of graves from the Bronze Age and in 35% from the Hallstatt period, an admixture of burned animal bones was found among human bones, mainly in graves with wooden constructions, which could be related to the wealth of people buried there. In the Hallstatt graves, charcoal from the pyre was recorded much less frequently than in the earlier phases.

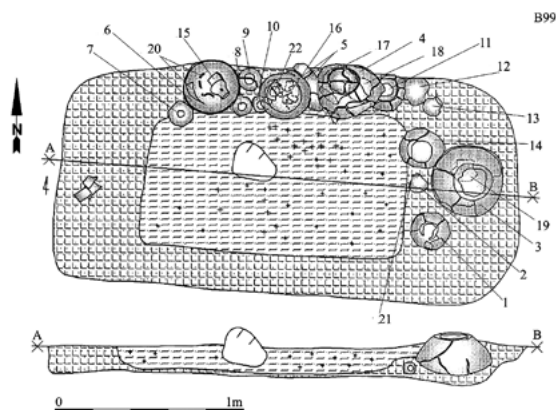
Organic matter, in the form of covers made of fabric, bark, grass and leather, has survived on numerous metal artefacts deposited in the Hallstatt chamber graves. The fragments of textiles, including those woven in 2/2 twill, have been preserved in 62 burials, mainly richly furnished chamber graves, on jewellery, dress accessories, toiletries, tools and weapons. Some of the urns were wrapped in fabrics, which is also suggested by a specific arrangement of ornaments on the urns³⁸. Headbands and belts, possibly prepared particularly for the funeral ceremony, were deposited. Pieces of bark have been found on and under the grave goods and urns, and also on a bronze vessel. In the most representative burials in the necropolis, the remnants of wickerwork, including baskets containing bronze bowls, were identified.

In all phases, the remains of the dead were placed in mainly shallow pits, but also in more elaborate features with internal wooden structures, which certainly also had been marked in various ways above ground. In cases of graves without internal constructions from the Bronze Age, rectangular features dominated, partly also arranged in oval-shaped pits, while in the Hallstatt period, graves were oval-shaped or circular and rarely rectangular. In the first and second phase, small features up to 0.5 m² predominated. The surface of the remaining features reached in the first and second phase up to 2 m² and sometimes to 6 m², rarely larger. In the Hallstatt phase, the outlines of burial pits were not determined in one third of the cases. Half of the features were graves with a surface of up to 0.5 m², less often beyond this size. Only few burials were 3.3 to 4.4 m² large. Stones were discovered in 8 to 15% of the pits from all periods. Characteristic of the graves from the first phase (also for those with internal constructions) was the presence of saddle quern-stones, used as plates or walls. In the first phase, they were lying in the ceilings of several shallow graves, forming a kind of a cobbled surface or could have functioned as markers on the surface. They sometimes were also loosely spread in the pits, and in several graves, vessels were crushed with stones. In the second phase, few of them were placed in the ceilings of the graves or larger ones inside of burial pits. Occasionally, stones were laid along one or several walls of the pit or stones have been found between, above or under the grave goods. In the graves from the third phase, stones were placed separately in the ceilings or inside the burial pits, under and on the grave goods. Larger constructions were discovered only in some cases.

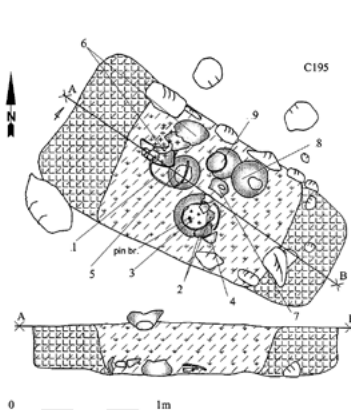
Graves with internal wooden constructions appeared at the cemetery throughout the whole period of its use with varying intensity and evolution of forms, reaching their apogee in the Early Iron Age (*Figs 3–8*). In 15% of the pits from the first phase, which were probably cov-

³⁸ JÓZEFOWSKA et al. 2023.

BD-HA1/HA2



HA2-HB3



HC

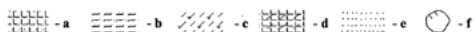
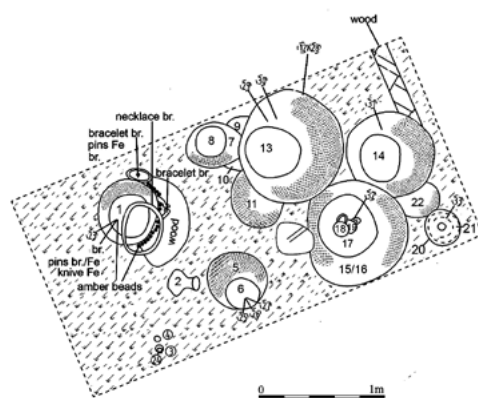
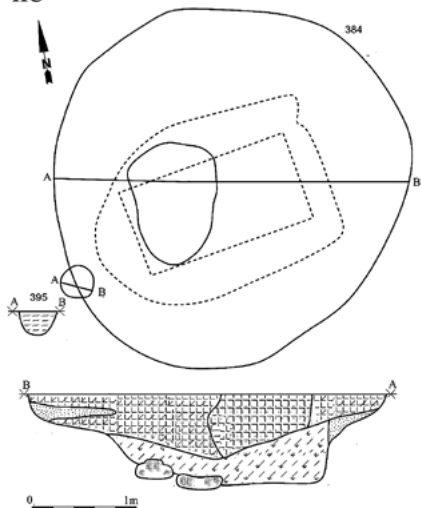


Fig. 3. Domasław/Chrzanów. Examples of graves with inner wooden constructions from different chronological phases: graves Nos B99, C195, 384. – a dark brown humus; b black humus; c brown-grey humus; d brown humus; e yellow sand; f stone.

ered with mounds, a hollow log of a tree, which was a kind of a coffin, was most probably placed, in which the burned remains of the deceased were scattered. This would be evidenced by the slightly rounded corners and small depth of internal structures, as well as by the layout of vessels, which usually surrounded the “casket”. The graves were built in large rectangular pits, 30% of which had a surface of over 7 m². Their depths ranged from 0.16 m to 0.4 m. The maximum width of their constructions was 1.2 m, while the length varied from 0.6 m to 2.96 m. In more than half of the graves with “coffins”, stones were found in various arrangements. Larger rocks were discovered in the ceilings of one fifth of them, but primarily there must have been many more of them, and we assume that many graves were marked with a larger stone on the surface. Often in the graves with constructions, stones were lying loosely in the pits outside the “coffins”, and in grave E157 they formed a compact structure at the southern

BD-HA1/HA2**HA2-HB3**

Fig. 4. Domasław/Chrzanów. Examples of graves with inner wooden constructions from the Bronze Age: 1. No. 12015; 2. No. E123; 3. No. 12058; 4. No. E105.

wall. The stones were also lying without clear arrangement in “coffins”. Only in one case, the burial was laid in the ceiling of the unurned grave with an internal construction.

In later periods, pits with internal constructions were smaller. In the second phase, 15% objects were distinguished in which wooden chests may have been built, most likely made of laths or half-round logs joined in the corners, often additionally reinforced with stones from the outside. The chests with wall lengths and widths varying between 0.6 to 2 m and 0.4 to 1.4 m, were built in large pits with a rectangular outline, covering 1 to 4 m² and reaching depths of 0.1 to 0.75 m. Stones were discovered in most of these graves. In some cases, larger stones were found in the ceilings of pits or near them or they were lying loosely in the pits, near chests, as well as, one or two stones were found from the east, north and south sides. In grave No. 10140,

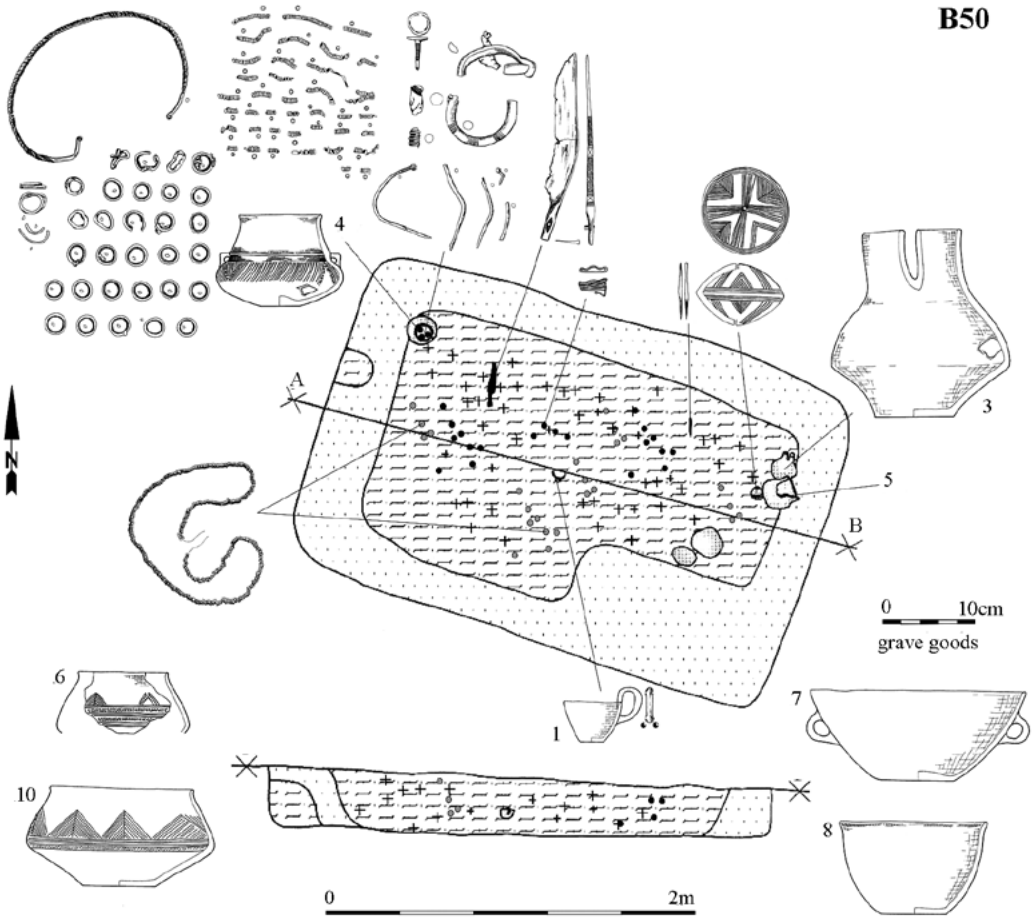


Fig. 5. Domasław/Chrzanów. Grave No. B50 from the Bronze Age.

at the western corners of the chest, single stones were placed, and a large, flat stone was located vertically in the south-eastern part. More stones lying in the south-western part and several loose stones on the circumference were found in grave No. B94 and in the central part of the northern wall of the chest in grave No. 6071. The layout of stones along the wall or walls of the chests repeated in one fifth of cases. Stones were also found inside some of the chests. Empty spaces which may indicate the presence of mounds, smaller than in earlier phases, were noticed around one fifth of these graves.

In the third phase, there were at least 291 wooden chambers in the burial pits (36%). The chambers were built in the pits with oval or circular outlines, with sizes in the range of 2.1 to 5 m², less often smaller or bigger – up to 13 m². The thickness of half of the pits was from 0.51 to 1.36 m, while burial pit No. 543 was almost 2 m deep. The chambers were usually rectangular, with a longer wall 1 to 1.5 m long. The largest chambers, in graves No. 390 and No. 7389, had dimensions of 1.5 × 2.3 m. In ca a dozen chamber graves, the contour of log constructions was found. In some of the burials, stones in the pit ceilings have been preserved, and a large stone cover construction was discovered in grave No. 8956. In one third of the chamber graves, single or several stones of various sizes were discovered, put into the grave pits, sometimes arranged in the shape of cobbles surrounding the chambers in sections. They were also placed on

HC



Fig. 6. Domasław. Chamber graves from the HC2–D1 period: 1. No. 6991; 2. No. 8954; 3. Visualisation of the chamber grave No. 4270.

the “lids” (Fig. 6,1) and inside the constructions. In few burials, stones covered the urns and artefacts near them, and in several graves boulders were exposed, which could have been thrown onto the grave goods, or deposited on the covers of chests which later collapsed. In about one third of the chamber graves, pottery deposits were found, and in one sixth there were urns dug into the ceilings or deposited outside the chests, which may be simultaneous or added at a later time. Putting containers and urns in the ceilings of larger burial pits was a new phenomenon

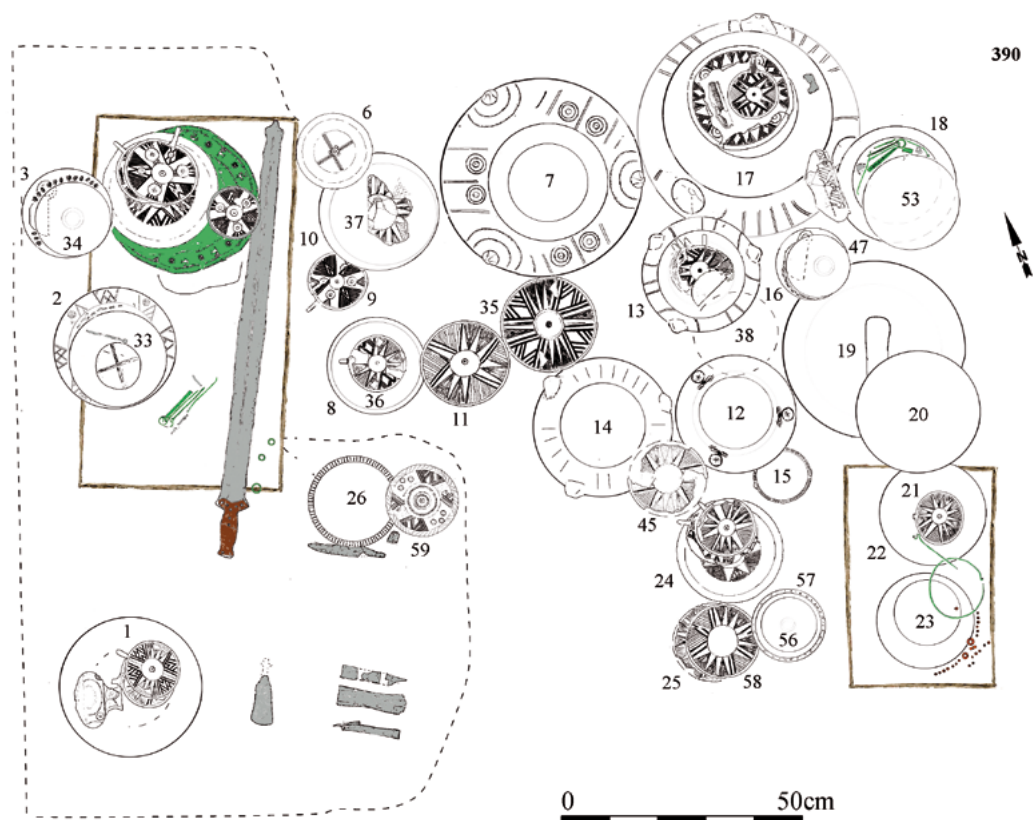


Fig. 7. Domasław/Chrzanów. Chamber grave No. 390 from the HC period.

from the second phase and it became more and more frequent. It seems that they were deposited intentionally, maybe as an offering. Some pottery deposits from the immediate vicinity of the burial pits, often placed on different sides of the graves, can be interpreted similarly.

Some graves were discovered in the vicinity of larger burial pits, also directly adjacent to or surrounding them. Ditches were noticed around 26 of the chamber graves, with an average diameter of 4.5 m, and empty zones were observed around several richly equipped graves, which may indicate they were somehow separated. The largest ditch No. 3408 had a diameter of 8.8 m. These objects created the largest complex of funerary ditches north of the Carpathian and Sudetes mountains³⁹.

Post constructions, which could be connected with the first and second phases, were rarely found at the cemetery. One post building probably from the first phase was recorded. In the Hallstatt phase, however, the constructions of the chamber graves were often connected with single and double posts discovered inside or /and in the immediate vicinity of the pits. Several times, the posts formed quadrangular structures, and in one case the remains of a lightweight construction made of stakes were probably discovered. Also, layouts of posts surrounded by circular ditches suggest that at least part of them were features with various types of constructions. Around the ditch associated with burial No. 5990, traces of five posts were found, which formed a large circular column structure. The number of burials with which ground constructions can

³⁹ JÓZEFOWSKA ET AL. 2022.

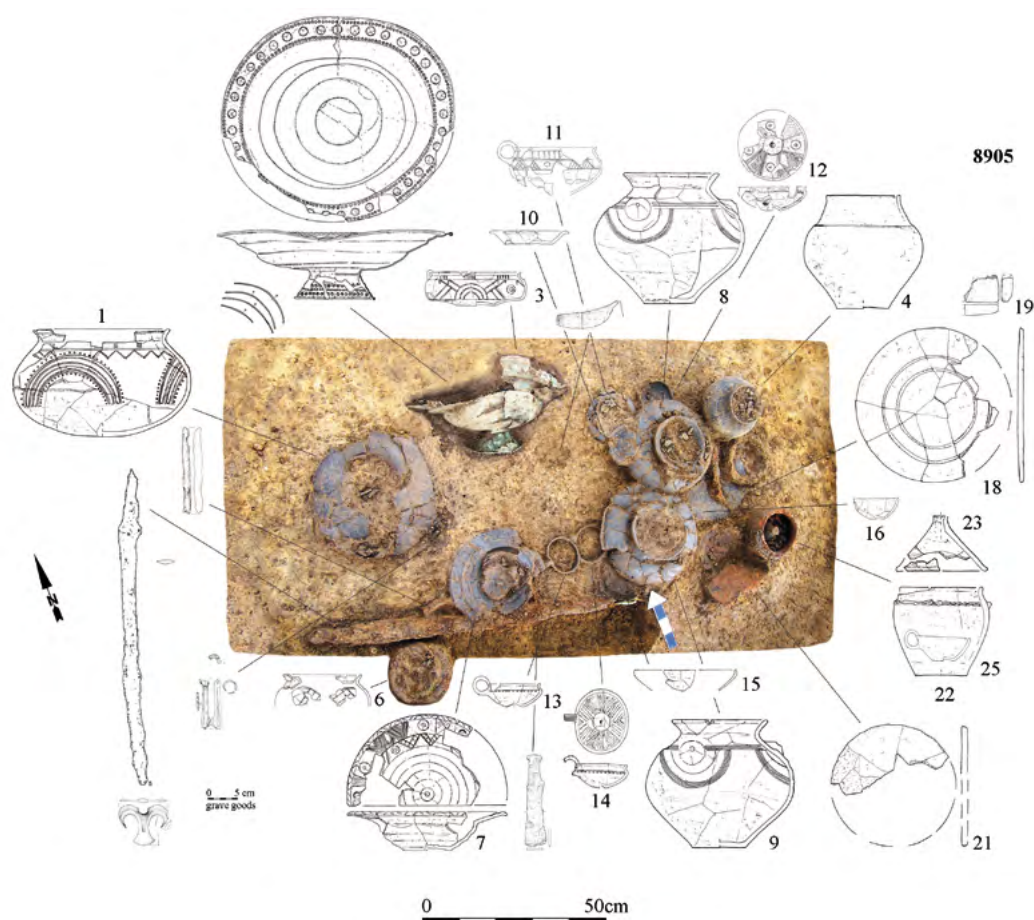


Fig. 8. Domasław / Chrzanów. Chamber grave No. 8905 from the HC period.

be associated, may suggest a change in the way graves were marked on the surface. And it is also possible that some of them were marked out or simple-structured houses of the dead were constructed there. It seems that the chamber graves, especially those surrounded by ditches, were associated with legitimising the high status of the dead. The grave structures, visible on the surface, most likely were designed to communicate the social position of the deceased.

The pottery from the graves

The assortment of pottery vessels and the proportions of their use changed over time, in association with the ritual activities performed during the funeral. Vases played the greatest part in the grave inventories of the first phase, when together with jugs they constituted one third of the sets of vessels, similarly to goblets. In the second phase their share decreased significantly, and in the third phase they constituted about one fifth of the vessels, with a small number of goblets. Cups and shallow cups were of great importance in all phases. Their number and their placement in larger containers suggest using them for activities related to the drawing of drinks. Over time, the number of bowls increased to one third in the third phase. The share of pots was in all phases around 20 %.

In all phases, as much as one third of urn graves without internal structures did not contain a vessel other than the urn, while graves with one to ten additional containers (except urns and urns with lids) dominated. In the case of the Bronze Age urnless graves, the situation was similar, except that in the second phase there were more graves with containers in the range of four to ten. In the next stage, urnless graves usually contained only one to two vessels. Graves with inner constructions were all the time “richer”, regardless of whether they contained an urn or not. In burials with “coffins” from the earliest phase, they were usually placed outside the chests, along one of the longer walls, but also a shorter wall, mainly on the north side. In half of the graves with inner constructions from the first phase, one to two vases with holes in the bottoms were placed, later such vessels were rare. In the first phase, up to ten non-urn vases were usually added, in graves from the second phase, mainly four to ten, but also more, up to 25. The situation was different in the case of chamber graves from the third phase. Almost all of them contained eleven to 40 additional containers, while in graves Nos 4270 and 390 were 42 and 54 (*Figs 6,3; 7*). Standing upside down vessels were noticed in about one fifth of the funeral complexes from the early phases, in the next one, such arrangement of the items was recorded only in the single graves. Stacking of vessels had also been more and more frequent – up to in one third of graves from the third phase, especially in chamber graves. In the fillings of most graves, loose fragments of pottery were found. It can be assumed that they took part in various funeral activities or during feasts / sacrifices and were deliberately destroyed. Over time, the share of secondarily burnt fragments (and containers) in graves was increasing.

The first phase was characterised by the presence of forms made in the so-called knob style. Vases and spherical cups with a sharp bend on the body, with a cylindrical or conical neck, belong to the most typical forms, as well as jugs and miniature jugs and sharply profiled bowls. In the HA2 and HB1 periods, new forms joined the older ones (s. below *Fig. 11*), there were also numerous vases and cups with gentler profiles, bowls with handles, mugs and pots. The ornamentation, limited to the upper part of the body, mostly took the form of grooves and canelures, and bands. The characteristic knob ornament had gradually taken the form of small stuck knobs surrounded by semi-circular or oblique grooves. Various forms of rattles started to appear as well. During the HB2 and HB2 / B3 periods, most vessels represented the same types as in period HB1. Profiles were significantly gentler and the shapes more spherical. Disk plates and the so-called caskets with a lid were the new forms. ‘Graphitisation’ was often used, mainly from the inside and in the upper parts from the outside. The pottery from the end of the second phase was dominated by vessels with rounded edges, although a large number of bowls was recorded, less frequently vases with edges bent outwards and edges cut from the inside. The pottery was decorated with extensive geometric ornamentation. The decorative zone also expanded, including the belly below the bend and the lower part of the neck. The ornamentation of the so-called plaited triangles was the most characteristic motif of this phase. Completely new forms, taken from the areas of the Hallstatt culture, can be distinguished among the vessels of the third phase – vases with a conical neck and a funnel-shaped rim as well as bowls with a flanged rim. The use of painting technique was a new custom, the ceramics were also “graphited”, and rarely encrusted⁴⁰. The ornaments of burial vessels were very elaborate, with often complicated motifs – circular, linear, triangular, solar discs, triskelions. Sets that reflect feasting habits known from the Hallstatt culture, vessels for eating, drawing and drinking, appeared in the graves. Sets in the chambers often consisted of two to three vases with funnel-shaped spouts, vases with cylindrical necks, 3–6–9–12 scoops, cups, bowls, 1–3 bowls with flanged

⁴⁰ GEDIGA et al. 2017; ŁACIAK 2019.

rim. Large vases with conical necks, often placed two in the central chamber zone, could play a key role in a ceremony of drinking alcohol, distributed among guests using smaller vessels. It seems that bowls, cups and scoops, stacked near the vases, were placed empty as equipment for drawing and drinking. Pots, often protected by lids and containing scoops, were placed in the eastern zone. Isolated features from the fourth phase contained very poor sets of pottery vessels, usually single urns and accompanying bowls.

Other finds from the graves

Almost half of the urned burials from the first phase contained ornaments, weapons and tools made of bronze, stone and clay, usually deposited in fragments, partly damaged in the funeral pyre. There were mainly bronze pins and their fragments, and several graves contained bronze spearheads, arrowheads, stoneware, clay loom weights, spindle whorls and spools. Also, bronze fragments of bracelets and necklaces, pendants/spiral beads, knobs, a punch and a hoop from a destroyed artefact, a razor, a fragment of a blade and a glass bead were found in the burials. Grave goods other than pottery vessels were rarer in the urned burials without wooden constructions. Those with inner constructions belonged to the richly equipped features from this phase. In one fifth of them, fragments of bronze artefacts melted in the funeral pyre were found, yet in 62% of the graves were other artefacts, mostly bronze pins and their fragments, but also fragments of bronze bracelets, necklaces or hoops as well as fragment of an antler bit and a single arrowhead, tweezers, a hoop, a necklace made of clay beads. In grave No. B109 fragments of pins, a bracelet and a sickle as well as a bronze arrowhead and a ring made of gold wire were discovered.

In the second phase, one fourth of the urned and on fifth of the urned graves without wooden constructions were equipped with ornaments, tools and weapons, mainly pins or their fragments. There were also found occasionally bronze bracelets and their fragments, knives, spear- and arrowheads, awls/punches, rings, knobs, pendants, spirals, a razor, a sickle, rivets, beads, as well as glass beads, clay rattles, including an ornithomorphic one, caskets, wheels of cult vehicle, a crucible, loom weights, spindle whorls, pendants, rings, a fragment of a stone axe, and a mountain crystal. The burial of a child No. 10165 was unique, with a bronze pin, three bracelets and wheels, and a bear tooth pendant. In about half of the urned graves with chests other artefacts, mostly pins, were found. These graves also contained bronze rings, a fragment of a spiral, bead, stone tools, amber and glass beads, ceramic caskets, rattle and spindle whorl, bone awl. Knives were put into six graves, in grave No. 10113 together with fragments of a bronze bowl and a gold spiral. In grave No. B89, there was a fragment of a bracelet and probably a necklace consisting of clay pendants and beads, and in grave No. 8375 – a fragment of a sword head, an arrowhead, stone pendants and fragments of bronze pins. In one third of the urned graves with internal wooden structure, equipment other than pottery vessels were found (in 62% in the first phase). Pins did not dominate among them. Excavated were bronze rings, bracelets, a knife, punch, knob, rivet, axe, salta leone bead, pendant, clay casket, spindle whorl and rattles, glass beads, a stone flake-axe. From burial No. B50 at least 730 glass beads and many fragments, partly melted, a bronze knife and punch, a large double conical rattle, a ring made of gold wire, melted gold and a large amount of bronzes, as well a vessel deposit with more than 50 glass beads and bronze artefacts (including 29 rings and many fragments, a twisted necklace, fragments of pins and bracelets, 90 salta leone beads) were excavated (*Fig. 5*).



Fig. 9. Domasław / Chrzanów. Ceramic wagon from chamber grave No. 4270.



Fig. 10. Domasław / Chrzanów. Swords and fittings from the graves:
1. No. 7429; 2. No. 3754; 3. No. 7391; 4. No. 8905; 5. No. 5996; 6.
No. 8956; 7. No. 390.



Fig. 11. Grave goods from different chronological phases from Domasław / Chrzanów.

In the third phase, apart from the continuation of many aspects, iron was introduced, and a new style of products appeared. A set of metal artefacts rarely found in archaeological materials from Poland can be distinguished: vessels, spearheads, swords, flat iron axes with side projections, chisels, elements of horse harness, toilet sets, needle holders, swan-neck pins, bracelets with stamped ends, harp-shaped fibulae (Figs 7; 8; 10; 11). The few unurned burials without inner constructions were much more poorly equipped. Numerous non-vessel artefacts were found in the urned graves without chambers. In about 40% of burials, artefacts other than ceramic containers were found, mainly pins but also necklaces or their fragments, bracelets, spirals, rings, needles, sickles, knives, beads, knobs, toilet sets, and stone artefacts. In some graves, single pins or a knife were found, while in others the number of non-pottery artefacts exceeded 20 functional classes. Toiletry sets, amber rings, axes, needle-cases, harp-shaped fibulae, elements of horse harness were placed only in the chambers. Swords were found in eight chamber graves, with large bronze vessels in graves No. 390 and 8905 (Figs 7; 8). A ceramic cult wagon (Fig. 9), zoomorphic rhyta, and vessels with funnels belong to a group of unique finds. Ornaments and elements of clothes, tools, toiletry sets and weapons were placed in the western part, near the urns. Disc plates, usually located at the eastern walls of the chests, were put into two third of the chamber graves. In half of the chamber graves, there were clay platforms, so-called moon-shaped idols. They were placed in the eastern parts of the chambers, mainly on the disc plates. The so-called

censers were found in two graves. Rattles were put into or next to urns and bones, and miniature rhyta near the urns, from the western or eastern sides, also near or on the disc plates.

Due to the lack of characteristic material, the graves from the fourth phase could be partly unrecognised. Only in the urn from grave No. 8966 iron fibulae with ornamented shaft and amber caps, amber beads and a buckle as well as iron fittings from a non-preserved artefact were excavated.

Discussion: The Domasław necropolis in the Bronze Age in its wider context

The Middle Bronze Age, beginning around the 14th/13th centuries BC, brought the spread of the cremation rite in large areas of Europe, from the Iberian Peninsula to the Bug River Basin. This period coincided with the commencement of the utilisation of the cemetery of the Lusatian Urnfield in Domasław. In the periodisation of the Nordic Bronze Age, most often used in Poland, this corresponds to the end of Period II and to Period III of the Bronze Age (BC2 and BD). The almost universal transition to cremation became a significant characteristic for communities living, among others, in the areas of Central Europe. Inspiration for this change can be sought in at least two ways. Frequently, efforts have been made to indicate the geographical region where the new custom was formed, and to try to determine the directions of its propagation⁴¹. We think that the most important inspiration for such a change in burial customs was a transformation of (some of) the doctrinal assumptions of the religion of that time. Moreover, local conditions, social and economic structures, and other elements of culture should be given paramount importance. However, tracing back the origins of said burial rites solely based on archaeological evidence is extremely challenging.

The changes in burial rites observed at the cemetery in Domasław are related to the general picture of cultural transformations, of which they are an important element, taking place both in the wider region and in the nearest neighbouring area. The Early Bronze Age and beginning of the Middle Bronze Age, belonging to the periods BB, BC and BD and to Period II of the Bronze Age, is dated from around 1600–1500/1450 BC to about 1250/1200 BC⁴². In pre-historic Europe, including Poland with Silesia, this is the period of the Tumulus cultures. The declining phase of this period overlapped with the beginning of a new cultural trend, defined as the period of the Urnfield cultures (at the end of Period II of the Bronze Age [BD], ca. 1300–1200 BC). For this early period of the Lusatian Urnfield culture in Silesia, there were several representative burial complexes at the cemetery in Domasław, for which dates were obtained using the radiocarbon dating (BB–BD, Period II and the first half of Period III). However, pottery from the graves of these early complexes, in the current periodisation schemes for Silesia, qualify them for the developed phase of the “knob” pottery typical for the BD phase or Period III of the Bronze Age⁴³.

The emergence of the Urnfield cultures in large areas of Europe meant a long period of time – until ca the 8th century BC – of cultural stabilisation, the formation of a settled society with an agricultural and breeding model of economy and the formation of more permanent social and political ties. At the same time, broader cultural contacts were limited to the circle

⁴¹ CABALSKA 1964, 18–44; GEDIGA 1976, 87–88; 1979, 320; 323; FURMÁNEK / MITÁŠ 2015, 268.

⁴² cf. KOSTRZEWSKI et al. 1965, 135; JACOB-FRIESEN 1973, 641–648; GEDIGA 1982, 49–58; tab. 1; DĄBROWSKI 2009, 17 tab. 1.

⁴³ GEDIGA 2019; GOSLAR 2019.

of the Carpathian Basin and the bronze metallurgy centres there, from which bronze products and probably also raw material flowed more or less intensively, which complemented the development of local metallurgy. It was mainly the time of the so-called dark ages in continental Greece. Contacts with the Mycenaean cultural circle ceased which was connected with the fall of the Mycenaean world⁴⁴. Summing up, in Central Europe this was a time of cultural stability without spectacular cultural changes. This rhythm of cultural development also included the burial rites, and more broadly the entire sphere of religion.

In the case of the cemetery in Domasław, no complexes were found that could illustrate the transition from the burial rites of the period of the Tumulus cultures to the new phase of the Urnfield cultures. Such examples with transitional features were found at some cemeteries in Silesia and in the adjacent part of Greater Poland⁴⁵. In Domasław, the uncovered graves show a model of burials typical for the Urnfield cultures. The detailed classification of the features of those burials made years ago by T. Malinowski remains valid in its main outline, and to a large extent we will use them in our considerations⁴⁶.

Large empty circular spaces (7 to 16 m in diameter) around some burial pits, noticed on the cemetery, make us consider the existence of burial mounds above them, mainly in the case of the graves dated to the middle period of the Bronze Age, Period III (BD, HA), but also in a few dozen cases to Period IV or even V of the Bronze Age and in the Hallstatt period⁴⁷. In this situation, it is difficult to state unequivocally that any possible burial mounds from the early phase of the cemetery in Period III were a continuation of the tradition of the Tumulus cultures. The presence of graves by the Lusatian Urnfield population in the neighbouring areas is confirmed by other cemeteries in Lusatia, e. g. from Klein Lieskow, Tornow and many others in the area between the Elbe, Saale, Oder and Neißerivers as well as from Moravia⁴⁸.

The manifestation of the tradition in burial rites may be chamber graves with wooden constructions constituting a kind of coffins, within which burned remains of the deceased were scattered. Similar graves with similar constructions are known from Kietrz and Krzanowice in Upper Silesia, for which Gedl formulated the term the “Kietrz-type graves”⁴⁹. It would be a kind of reference to the tradition of the inhumation rite from the period of the Tumulus cultures. A similar custom of scattering bone remains after burning on a large area (1.7 × 0.35 m), corresponding to the size of inhumation (skeleton) graves, was also discovered at the cemetery in Klein Lieskow⁵⁰. Frequent occurrence of postholes near those graves at the cemetery in Kietrz recalls the motif of the so-called “grave houses” (*Grabhäuser*)⁵¹, which was also introduced for Silesia by Lothar F. Zotz as a result of the excavations at the mound cemetery in Mikowice, Namysłów district⁵². This issue is more widely discussed by Gedl and it is taken into account in the case of posts discovered near some early-Lusatian graves (e. g. grave No. E110) at the cemetery in Domasław⁵³. There is a possibility that those were constructions in the type of the “houses of the dead” raised above graves. This problem returns with the discovery of the chamber-house grave, even with a hearth and a kind of entrance door, from Groß Jauer in Lower Lusatia⁵⁴.

⁴⁴ KRAWCZUK 2000, 112.

⁴⁵ KOWIAŃSKA-PIASZYKOWA 1966; GEDL 1975, 86–99; GEDIGA 1978, 143–148; BUTENT-STEFANIAK/GEDIGA 1991, 97–103; KŁOSIŃSKA 1991, 651–661; 1994, 7–27.

⁴⁶ MALINOWSKI 1962.

⁴⁷ ANIOŁA et al. 2012, 446.

⁴⁸ Klein Lieskow: BUCK/BUCK 2010, 5. – Area between the Elbe, Saale, Oder and Neißerivers:

BREDDIN 1989, 116–119. – Moravia: DOHNAL 1974, 17; 18.

⁴⁹ GEDL 1984.

⁵⁰ BUCK/BUCK 2010, 9.

⁵¹ GEDL 1984, 19–24.

⁵² ZOTZ 1936, 196–211.

⁵³ GEDL 1984, 19–22.

⁵⁴ BÖNISCH 2013, 119–137.

Another trace of the tradition of the Tumulus cultures at the time of the development of the Lusatian Urnfield culture are the examples of graves with a mixed burial rite, with partially burnt skeletons. The cemetery in Zbrojewsko, Kłobuck district, may be, among others, an example of continuation of a burial site from the period of the Tumulus cultures represented by inhumation graves through the successive periods of the Bronze Age⁵⁵. The above examples illustrate to some extent the transition from the system of burial rites of the population of the Tumulus cultures to the Urnfield cultures, and especially the transitional phase dated to the BD period⁵⁶. However, they were very rare at the discussed cemetery, despite the early radiocarbon dates. This would mean that the beginnings of the early phase of the Lusatian Urnfield cultures in the significant features could be dated a little earlier than they were so far. This briefly described period would be the first stage in the transformation of the burial rites in the Bronze Age in the case of the cemetery in Domasław, as well as in the case of other cemeteries, mainly from Silesia.

During the following centuries of the Early and Late Bronze Age, from Periods IV and V (HA2, HB1) to ca. 8th century BC, i. e. the beginnings of the HC period, burial rites both at the cemetery in Domasław and in the region did not change importantly. There were even significantly unified cemeteries from the Early to the Late Bronze Age, which shows that societies in large parts of our continent had similar ideological ideas in common at that time⁵⁷. Monographic studies, especially from the period shortly after World War II, show us – despite the general unification – a large variety of features of material aspects of burial rites. In terms of significant features, they have a supra-regional universal character, typical of the circle of the Urnfield cultures. This is confirmed and most comprehensively for the whole area of the Lusatian Urnfield area in the monograph by Malinowski⁵⁸. Characteristics of the burial rite from the most interesting neighbouring regions of the cemetery in Domasław are brought by the already mentioned recent studies on prehistoric Czechia, Moravia and some large cemeteries, such as Tornow, Klein Lieskow, Niederkaina in Lusatia, Moravičany in Moravia, and Domamyslice⁵⁹. And analogous, usually detailed studies were made by Gedl for Upper Silesia and the cemeteries in Kietrz, Głubczyce district and Zbrojewsko, Kłobuck district⁶⁰, by J. Juchelka for Czech Silesia⁶¹, by Gediga for Central Silesia⁶², and by I. Lasak for the Silesian-Greater Poland border⁶³. Several large Lusatian Urnfield cemeteries from the northern part of Lower, western Greater Poland and Greater Poland Lakeland have also been researched⁶⁴. This picture is complemented by recent monographic publications on cemeteries from Greater Poland, researched on a larger scale⁶⁵. The recently published source monograph by Elżbieta Kłosińska on the cemetery in Radom-Wośniki deserves to be mentioned here⁶⁶. Although a bit

⁵⁵ GEDL 2002c, 247–275.

⁵⁶ JACOB-FRIESEN 1973, 644.

⁵⁷ JIRÁŇ 2008, 225.

⁵⁸ MALINOWSKI 1962.

⁵⁹ Czechia: JIRÁŇ 2008; VENCLOVÁ 2008. – Moravia: PODBORSKÝ 1993. – Some large cemeteries, such as Tornow (BREDDIN 1989; 1992), Klein Lieskow (BUCK/BUCK 2010; 2011), Niederkaina in Lusatia (COBLENZ/NEBELSICK 1997a; 1997b; HEYD 1998; 2000; NEBELSICK 2001; HEYD 2002; KAISER 2003; PUTTKAMMER 2003; HOPPEL/JANSEN 2007; PUTTKAMMER 2008; GUHL 2020; MANSCHUS/SCHMIDT 2021; 2022), Moravičany

in Moravia (NEKVASIL 1982) and Domamyslice (SEDLAČEK 2005).

⁶⁰ GEDL 1962, 142–152; 1964; 2002b, 74–116; 2002c, 247–275, further literature there.

⁶¹ JUCHELKA 2014.

⁶² GEDIGA 1967, 243–250.

⁶³ LASAK 2001, 290–366.

⁶⁴ Lower Silesia: e. g. KOŁODZIEJSKI 1972, 23–172; Przyborów: MARCINKIAN 1972, 173–423. – Western Greater Poland: KACZMAREK 2002, 248–263. – Greater Poland Lakeland: SZAMAŁEK 2009, 134–142.

⁶⁵ SZCZUREK/PUDEŁKO 2015; KACZMAREK 2017.

⁶⁶ KŁOSIŃSKA 2018, 87–98.

distant from the regions of our interest and differing significantly in cultural terms, however, it brings many interesting general remarks, reflections and hypotheses regarding burial rites. The same can also be applied to the monograph by M. Trybała-Zawiślak due to the methodology of spatial and chronological analysis of cemeteries of the Tarnobrzeg group of the Lusatian Urnfield circle, also in the aspect of rituals⁶⁷.

Sources published in these works, as well as those discussed in synthetic monographs, show us the essential elements of funeral rites and their transformations, which are observable in the material remains of funeral practices. The evidence for the essential features of these ritual practices in the south-west of Poland, as well as in the Czech Republic, Moravia and Lusatia, shows that cremation still remained the prevailing form. Urn graves definitely dominated. Burnt bones are usually found in small amounts also outside the urns. Moreover, the occurrence of burnt bones loosely distributed within a grave is observed. This type is distinguished as “urned and unurned” graves and is found at cemeteries in most of the mentioned regions. Quite often graves hold more than one urn with human remains. Only anthropological analyses can determine whether these were burials of several individuals, which often is the case. It seems that the simplest explanation for multiple burials in one grave is that these graves were set up for relatives, e.g. a woman with a child. Also, the burials of men with a child or even several children are frequent examples, as at the cemetery in Klein Lieskow or at smaller cemeteries like Cottbus Alvensleben-Kaserne⁶⁸.

A common phenomenon at many cemeteries is the occurrence of complexes with formal features typical of graves, but without bones. The features of a more universal character, recorded for the period from the Early Bronze Age to the 8th century BC, i.e. to the HC–D1, are also found at the cemetery in Domasław. As a rule, the most frequent are flat graves, i.e. without burial mounds.

Graves at the cemetery in Domasław were not protected by more regular stone constructions⁶⁹, as it was in the case at burial sites in, e.g., Greater Poland, Moravia and Lusatia⁷⁰. Also, at cemeteries in many regions of the Lusatian Urnfield culture numerous stone constructions, including carefully formed structures resembling chests made of stone slabs, were found⁷¹. During the research at the cemetery in Domasław, stones near graves were discovered in many cases, and some of them could be considered as steles situated on the graves. Throughout the whole discussed period, there were various wooden constructions in some graves, which were a kind of casing for burial pits, and sometimes they formed a kind of chambers-chests, usually made of wooden laths. In the case of the cemetery in Domasław, the outlines of grave pits of quite regular rectangular shape were discovered, suggesting that they could have been covered with wood, forming a kind of chambers or chests, the visible remains of which did not survive. These graves with distinguished constructions in all periods had richer or “more important” inventories, e.g., the grave No. C200 with a ditch from the second phase contained bronze arrowheads.

Pottery still dominated among grave goods. In addition to the urns, there are various types of vessels whose numbers and presumed functions lead to the formulation of various questions and hypotheses. In Domasław we observe a significant increase in the number of vessels in

⁶⁷ Trybała-Zawiślak 2015, 115–159.

⁶⁸ Klein Lieskow: BUCK/BUCK 2010, 7. – Cottbus Alvensleben-Kaserne: GRAMSCH 2010.

⁶⁹ It is possible that stones were deposited more frequently than they were found and originally there may have been stone constructions on the surface

of the graves, removed over the years in this intensively used agricultural area.

⁷⁰ Greater Poland: KACZMAREK 2002, 242–246; SZAMALEK 2009, 138–139. – Moravia: DOHNAL 1974, 19–20. – Lusatia: BREDDIN 1989, 112.

⁷¹ TREFNÝ/JIRÁŇ 2012, 120.

graves with internal constructions, what became particularly suggestive in the case of chamber graves from the third phase.

Among grave goods discovered in Bronze Age graves were numerous items made of bronze, primarily placed as fragments of jewellery and dress accessories (pins, bracelets, buttons, beads, rarely necklaces), and whole tools and weapons (knives, razors, awls, arrowheads, spearheads).

Discussion: The Domasław necropolis and the Hallstatt Culture

It seems reasonable to conclude that the time from the Early to the Late Bronze Age, i. e. Periods IV and V of the Bronze Age (HA2–HC), was a period without spectacular changes in burial practices in the Lusatian Urnfield circle in the regions of our interest. It was a time of stabilisation in terms of burial rituals, visible also in other aspects of culture. However, already in the early stages, there were noticeable testimonies of the local community gaining access to very valuable goods from southern Europe, such as glass beads, (fragments of) bronze swords or vessels. In each of the phases, we can point to impressive burials, in which the status of the deceased had been highlighted by architecture, ground markings and equipment, including the number of ceramics. Thus, the formation of a local leading stratum is a phenomenon that can be observed in the Domasław necropolis already in the Bronze Age. Some of the burials can even be called “princely”, as in the case of the new-born’s grave No. B50, with unique double necked vessel, a deposit of bronze objects in the vessel, a huge amount of glass beads, a gold ring, and threads of golden wire that may come from textile. Nevertheless, the portion of the graves of “elites” in the Bronze Age remains constant – at about 15%.

A significant change in funeral rites is noticeable in the Early Iron Age (Hallstatt period), and manifests in a new way of visualising the deceased and in the elite burial practices across vast parts of Europe. This period is marked by the intensification of long-distance connection and contacts and the emergence of sumptuous burials with swords, bronze vessels, horse-gear, and extravagantly decorated ceramics⁷². The cultural changes taking place at that time in prehistoric Europe, mainly under the influence of the Hallstatt culture, and through it also from the Mediterranean civilisations, had multiple consequences. In our areas, the impact was in fact limited to south-western Poland, mainly Silesia and the adjacent areas of Greater Poland. Hence, the term Hallstatt period cannot be applied to entire Poland. Moreover, in the light of the new research results the claim that still in the Early Iron Age the Lusatian culture was present in south-western Poland becomes difficult to support.

Until recently, the main studies on the issues of the Hallstatt period in Polish archaeological literature focused on imports from the Hallstatt culture and northern Italy appearing in Poland. The wider cultural implications of this influx of attractive, mostly luxurious items were considered to a much lesser extent. L. J. Łuka tried to refer to this topic a little more broadly⁷³. In 1991 Gedl published a study on imports and Hallstatt imitations, mainly in terms of typological classification and analysis, but also discussing the chronology and the influx routes⁷⁴.

⁷² The penetration of southern influences was already visible in the Bronze Age. However, at the beginning of the Iron Age, with the emergence of centres in the western part of the Mediterranean basin, many parts of western and central Europe were included in the system of long-distance supra-regional exchange. The influences of new ideas changed the awareness of local societies, and

the interaction of these worlds resulted in transformations of social structures almost all over Europe. And it was not incidental, as before, but led to the formation of a certain privileged stratum at the interface with ancient cultures, which can be called “elite”.

⁷³ ŁUKA 1959.

⁷⁴ GEDL 1991.

The results of archaeological rescue excavations carried out on the A4 motorway construction route in Lower Silesia were a significant impulse to take up the issue of the role of the influence of the Hallstatt culture circle and northern Italy. The first sign of a new aspect in Early Iron Age Silesia, and more broadly in south-western Poland, were the discoveries on the settlement in Milejowice 19, Wrocław district⁷⁵. The settlement structures revealed larger clusters – building complexes, which are characterised by an analogous circular and square spatial arrangement⁷⁶. Among the group of building clusters on a circular plan, one of them is definitely distinguished by its architectural monumentality. Several buildings in this complex were surrounded by a structure similar to a palisade, which consisted of solid pales⁷⁷. The varied sizes of buildings located within this impressive fence is also noteworthy. Larger buildings dominated in comparison with other structures from the settlement. One of them was highlighted by its coverage of 142.5 m², as well as its more impressive architecture⁷⁸. Also, the artefacts from this complex are richer, including more fragments of bronze items and more lavishly elaborated vessels, as well as pottery of the Basarabi culture⁷⁹. Thus, both the artefacts and the architectural structure of the complex indicate that it was inhabited by a group that stood out in this community, and this large building could be occupied by a person and family of a particularly privileged position. Another cluster on the settlement in Milejowice, in the northern lane, the one with a fairly regular, almost square shape, is more clearly distinguished by a building within it. It was a little bit separated from other buildings, located along the edge of the square. This building was most probably a residential structure, with a much larger surface coverage than the others – ca. 75 m² – indicating, among other things, its special role in this complex, namely serving as a residential facility of a distinguished family⁸⁰. Another settlement in Stary Śleszów, Wrocław district, represents a different model, with a monumental solid fence and a different structure of buildings⁸¹. Its function encourages various interpretations.

The examples of building structures on the excavated settlements, yet mainly on the settlement in Milejowice, correspond with more unambiguous confirmations of changes in social structure. They involved, as in the entire zone of the Hallstatt culture, the formation of a distinctive, leading social group in separate communities. The creation of assumptions of this type may be a manifestation of the development of land ownership and/or another form of wealth accumulation and „it follows the standards of the elites, isolating their places of living”⁸².

In the Hallstatt circle the group of “aristocracy” set up their magnificent seats, most often separated from the settlements, referred to as *Herrensitze*, as well as separate cemeteries most often made up of rich barrow graves, the so-called “princely” graves. The settlement complex in Milejowice, surrounded by a solid fence, can be treated as a local realisation of a separate seat inhabited by an outstanding social group formed within the Early Iron Age population in Silesia. This would be a manifestation of a universal tendency resulting from an analogous idea of manifesting one’s special position, which we also find further to the West, in the circle of the Hallstatt culture. This idea reached the societies in south-western Poland, and especially in Silesia, along with the strong cultural influences coming from the south. However, it has been adapted to the scale of regional architectural possibilities and traditions.

⁷⁵ BUGAJ/GEDIGA 2004; 2022.

⁷⁶ BUGAJ/KOPIASZ 2008, fig. 3.

⁷⁷ BUGAJ/KOPIASZ 2006, fig. 10.

⁷⁸ BUGAJ/KOPIASZ 2006, 196; MARKIEWICZ 2019, fig. 9; 10.

⁷⁹ BUCHNER/BUGAJ 2020, 90; GEDIGA et al. 2020, 188–190.

⁸⁰ For a different opinion cf. BARON et al. 2011, 353–356.

⁸¹ KOPIASZ 2003, 101–225; BUCHNER 2018; MARKIEWICZ 2018.

⁸² BUGAJ/KOPIASZ 2008, 111; MILCENT 2017, 104.

The changes in the Hallstatt period embraced all cultural spheres. Adaptation of new values considerably disturbed the existing structures and in effect formed a completely new model of material culture and a new social and political system, highlighting the significant role of the emerging elite⁸³. However, the results of research on settlements such as Milejowice or Stary Śleszów are only a fragment of the whole, not as clear as the picture that emerges from the analysis of funeral practices visible in the cemetery in Domaśław. Domaśław shows even more clearly a society, or at least a part of it, that has been significantly reshaped by the impulses arriving from the circle of Hallstatt culture.

The results of the research at the cemetery in Domaśław provided absolutely unambiguous suggestive premises for shaping a new image of the Hallstatt period in Silesia and in south-western Poland in general⁸⁴. In Domaśław, like in adjacent regions, the burial complexes from the Early Iron Age confirm that a kind of aristocracy formed in Silesia. The provenance of the objects retrieved from the richly furnished graves show that the elites of the local population maintained extensive contacts with the important centres in the sub-Alpine circle of the Hallstatt culture and thus – indirectly – with the Mediterranean region – mainly northern Italy⁸⁵. The community burying their relatives in the Domaśław necropolis strove to maintain the living standards and emulate the lifestyle of the “aristocracy” from those areas⁸⁶.

The material inventory obtained from settlements of the leading group of the Hallstatt society is much poorer than that coming from the graves. Earlier research on cemeteries with graves from the Early Iron Age reveals a different picture of culture than the one shown by the Lusatian Urnfield graves from the Bronze Age. The main examples are the cemeteries in Kietrz, Głubczyce district, as well as the cemetery in Świbie, Gliwice district and the grave of a “warrior” from Łazy, Wołów district⁸⁷. However, it was not until the grave complexes from the Hallstatt period were discovered at the cemetery in Domaśław that more in-depth research on the issue of cultural transformations taking place in Poland at that time was successfully taken up.

The extensive excavations unveiled a trove of new sources, igniting new academic inquiry. With over 800 cremation graves, including nearly 300 chamber graves, a new image emerged compared to the Lusatian urnfields. Closer examination suggests that the early inhabitants of Silesia and the adjacent areas of Greater Poland were part of a distinct regional north-eastern group within the Hallstatt culture circle⁸⁸. This is not a completely new view, as Silesia had already been regarded as a peripheral group of the Hallstatt culture⁸⁹. Otto-Herman Frey referred to Mediterranean influences in the grave furnishings, and Wolfgang Kimmig wrote about the process of ‘Mediterranisation’ taking place in the Early Iron Age, an important element of which was the emergence of painted pottery, under the influences from the eastern part of the Mediterranean basin, in Western and Central Europe, including Silesia⁹⁰. It is not the only element of the material culture of the societies living in Silesia at that time that connected them with the circle of

⁸³ CHOCHOROWSKI 2009, 90; GEDIGA 2010; 2011; GEDIGA/JÓZEFOWSKA 2019, 210–214; BUGAJ/GEDIGA 2022.

⁸⁴ JÓZEFOWSKA/NOWACZYK 2009, 159–173; GEDIGA 2011, 83–116; JÓZEFOWSKA/ŁACIAK 2012, 463–173; GEDIGA 2013, 383–401; 2016, 3–21; JÓZEFOWSKA 2018, 183–208.

⁸⁵ GEDIGA 2010; 2016; GEDIGA/JÓZEFOWSKA 2019, 214.

⁸⁶ GEDIGA 2010, 193–209; GEDIGA/JÓZEFOWSKA 2019, 210–211.

⁸⁷ Kietrz: GEDL 2002b, 75–116. – Świbie: WOJCIECHOWSKA 1986, 147–170; 1996, 513–523; MICHNIK 2007; 2022; MICHNIK/DZIĘGIELEWSKI 2022. – Łazy: MADERA 1999, 231–246; 2002, 149–179.

⁸⁸ GEDIGA 2011, 109 fig. 17.

⁸⁹ REITINGER 1981, 9.

⁹⁰ See below. – FREY 1980, 97; KIMMIG 1983, 710.

the Hallstatt culture. As has been discussed above, the most significant change took place in the social structure, reflected in the settlements, but mainly in the cemeteries, disclosing the formation of a kind of Hallstatt aristocracy who wanted to emphasise its unique position and manifest it by residing in separated parts of settlements⁹¹. In the case of cemeteries, they were either set up exclusively for this social layer or, in other cases, relatively monumental tombs were erected.

At the same time, aspects of the symbolic culture changed, with these graves mirroring the eschatological sphere. Burial chambers became a kind of chambers in which the deceased, in a similar way to the heroes from the Homer's epics, would continue their habits, such as welcoming guests, arranging feasts or hunting, and above all, in this new posthumous reality, they would manifest their social position in many ways. To the place of their eternal rest, the deceased were usually transported on chariots and placed on them in the grave chambers. The customs of the Hallstatt aristocracy, probably mythologised to a large extent, were presented in the narrative scenes of situla art from that period⁹². A significant part of these specific cultural features can be found in the sources from the cemetery in Domasław, as well as, among others, on the mentioned Silesian sites.

It was also painted pottery which incorporated the Silesian region into the Central European cultural circle of the Early Iron Age. This distinctive ceramic is associated with the regions of Silesia, Greater Poland, and also Lusatia⁹³. To a certain extent, the reference point may be the painted examples from the so-called "princely" graves of the Hallstatt culture, such as from Hohmichele and Hochdorf in Germany, Sopron in Hungary, and "Kröll-Schmiedkogel" (also known as "Kröll-Kogel") from Kleinklein in Austria⁹⁴.

Comparing the structures and grave goods from Domasław with the "princely" graves, we observe many similarities as well as significant differences. The "princely" graves have most often barrows, while the chamber burials in Domasław, like those in Kietrz, were flat graves in their present state. However, the cemeteries are situated on fertile soils, where agriculture has continued uninterrupted from the Neolithic to the present day, so possible mounds had very little chance of surviving to our times. Contrary to the uncremated bodies, buried in the rich Hallstatt graves and transported to their resting place on wagons, which usually then were disassembled, at the cemetery in Domasław, cremation was the only practice used. The absence of wagon burials, the practice of cremation, and perhaps the greater importance of ceramic funerary sets, may have contributed to less elaborate funerary displays. However, a beautiful painted ceramic four-wheeled chariot from grave No. 4270 may be a suggestive indication that the community from Domasław was familiar with the wagons' symbolism (*Fig. 9*). The practice of using chariots in burial ceremonies is not unique for the Hallstatt circle. They are also known from Etruscan graves in central Italy, from scenes on Greek vases, e.g. Dipylon vases, and from our neighbouring Bylany culture in the Czech Republic.

Scenes from the paintings from Etruscan tombs as well as the very suggestive grave goods from the Hallstatt "princely" graves seem to reveal the secrets of the eschatological beliefs of that time. Paintings of Etruscan tombs, mainly from Tarquinia, are full of joy of life and sensuality and reflect the hedonistic attitude to life of rich Etruscans⁹⁵. To a large extent, as all researchers stress, these images of Etruscans remained under the influence of the Greek and generally Mediter-

⁹¹ REITINGER 1981, 10; SCHLETTE 1984, 27–35.

⁹² SCHLETTE 1984, 47–85; EIBNER 2018; GEDIGA 2001; 2010; 2011; 2019.

⁹³ Silesia, Greater Poland: MALINOWSKI 2012, 62–63. – Lusatia: COBLENZ 1953, 119–141.

⁹⁴ Hohmichele: REITINGER 1981, 15. – Hochdorf: BIEL 1985. – Sopron: EIBNER-PERSY 1980. – Kleinklein: DOBIAT 1980; KRAMER 2006, 141–162; EGG/KRAMER 2013; 2016.

⁹⁵ DOBROWOLSKI 1971, 197–201.

ranean civilisations. The subject of these sepulchral paintings rather shows us the cheerful world of the further existence of the dead, similar to the one they had during their lifetime, and the tombs were given the shape of a house⁹⁶. These motifs can also be found among the societies of the Hallstatt circle and probably also in the chamber graves in Silesia, such as from Kietrz and Domasław. Both the form of these tombs and the grave goods strongly refer to the burial customs of the Etruscans and their world of beliefs⁹⁷. The fact that the burial chambers of the Hallstatt and Silesian aristocrats served as houses for the deceased, and they were their hosts, is supported by the character of furnishings in these graves. The outstanding deceased received guests and offered them food and drinks themselves. The large number of vessels, mainly tableware, in the rich graves at the cemetery in Domasław and other similar cemeteries in Silesia may indicate analogous images of life after death functioning in this community.

The adaptation of burial customs to the new cultural situation formed within the Hallstatt culture and the wider Hallstatt circle in southern, south-western and south-eastern Europe has become clearly visible. A significant feature of the Hallstatt aristocracy, as well as of the leading stratum of the society of the Early Iron Age in Silesia, was the multi-sided manifestation of their position. This custom of a quite universal character, characteristic not only of these communities, consisted in distinguishing their seats, but was also to be demonstrated in the posthumous reality. The unique status could be emphasised by the special arrangement on the cemetery – houses of the dead, mounds, and markers such as stones, sculptures, totems, gates – which played an important role in the process of heroisation of members of the elites, or by the separation of a group of graves with surrounding ditches. One of the important means for this purpose was weapons that had also a distinctive function⁹⁸. Many examples confirming such a role of weapons can be found in the Homer's *Odyssey*⁹⁹. The chamber graves with swords indicate that also the Early Iron Age elites in Silesia picked up these ideas (*Figs 7; 8; 10*)¹⁰⁰. The swords were imported items of great value, but the strength of the customary imperative and the need to manifest the position in the posthumous reality must have been overwhelming. In the world of the Early Iron Age, the sword, unlike any other instrument of war, highlighted the domination of the elites¹⁰¹.

Luxury items were a special part of the exchange, which also raised the prestige of the leading stratum of the population in these regions¹⁰². These material traces of contacts with the Hallstatt circle and with the civilisations of the Mediterranean were also accompanied by an influx of new ideas changing the identity of the societies which they reached, as in Moravia or Lower Lusatia¹⁰³. A distinct demonstration of elite power was also present at Kietrz, in the biritual cemeteries in Świbie, Gliwice district and Opole-Groszowice, as well as in the burial of an individual with a sword and linchpin under a stone construction in Łazy. A similar situation is indicated in Gorszewice, Szamotuły district¹⁰⁴. In this case the location on the Amber Road, near the stronghold in Komorowo, a “commercial trading post”, makes it necessary to take unusual circumstances into account and may confirm the hypothesis of the dominant role in the intensive exchange of goods and raw materials with other significant centres of the Hallstatt period¹⁰⁵.

⁹⁶ PALLOTINO 1968, 217.

⁹⁷ REITINGER 1981, 14.

⁹⁸ GEDIGA 2012, 101–114.

⁹⁹ cf. FREY 1980.

¹⁰⁰ GEDIGA et al. 2018, 149–150.

¹⁰¹ GRALAK 2022.

¹⁰² GEDIGA 2007a, 7–12.

¹⁰³ NEKVASIL 1993, 356; BUCK / BUCK 2010, 5–8.

¹⁰⁴ Kietrz: GEDL 1973; 2002b. – Świbie: WOJCIECHOWSKA 1996; MICHNIK 2007; 2022; MICHNIK / DZIĘGIELEWSKI 2022. – Opole-Groszowice: PUROWSKI 2024. – Łazy: MADERA 1999; 2002. – Gorszewice: PIECZYŃSKI 1954, 101–152.

¹⁰⁵ MALINOWSKI 1985, 298; 2006.

Grave goods in Silesia were definitely dominated by pottery. What draws attention, however, is a quite characteristic set of containers, among which a significant number of drinking vessels were present. These assemblages are a clear reference to the analogous sets known from the graves of the Hallstatt “princes”, referring again to the images and descriptions of the graves of Greek heroes and partly to Etruscan graves. These would be the sets shaped by images of posthumous libations, which refer to eschatological beliefs of those times.

The prestige of the deceased can manifest in many forms, such as through the selection of the equipment and architecture, the quantity and quality of goods, but the goods should not be interpreted in terms of the economic roles of the dead. The graves with swords were not distinguished by “rich” equipment (except for grave No. 390, probably the youngest) and did not manifest the status of “luxury” in the context of wealth, but rather represented dominant power. Perhaps the idea of graves with swords was an act of reactivating the ideology of the Bronze Age elites highlighted by burial mounds, in whose shadow the dead were buried in the next period – a response to the “crisis” that required transformation and new legitimisation of the elites in the HC period (there were no swords in the youngest burials). The specific equipment of sword graves could probably be explained by the different way of expressing this social role by e.g. the presence of ditches and above-ground funeral constructions, the absence of painted vessels, jewellery and elements of dresses. In Domasław, the richness and quality of goods (jewellery, including spectacular bronze ornaments, number and size of the sympotic vessels) gradually increased and culminated around HC2–HD1, followed by changes. The contrast in wealth between Hallstattian “princely” burials and those from Domasław does not necessarily indicate socio-economic diversity. It is possible that the elites from Domasław chose this way of emphasising their wealth, and the elites in Central Europe, despite not necessarily being more powerful, opted for a funerary strategy centred around lavish burials and the deposition of valuable goods.

Conclusion

The observed phenomena and the accumulation of elements of material culture and ritual practices of Hallstatt origin in the cemetery in Domasław indicate the important role of this privileged community in the region. Similarities between the Hallstatt culture area and Silesia in the treatment of objects and dead suggest that geographically separated groups were incorporated into specific elite traditions. Rapid population growth led to an increase in the frequency of contacts between individuals and groups and intensification of social, political and economic interactions¹⁰⁶. Similarly, both the communities of the Hallstatt culture and those in Silesia strategically chose to establish their settlements in areas with advantageous natural conditions. They sought locations in basins of large rivers and areas with fertile soils and along important trade routes. These populations also shared a desire for luxury goods, and their ownership of valuable resources like copper, salt, or control over the amber trade provided them with the means to acquire such items. Although there were differences in the availability of raw materials and the distances to the regions where luxury goods were produced, these communities accumulated enough wealth to ensure the display of the deceased’s status as elites even in the afterlife.

The creation of centres of this type as in the Domasław region may be a manifestation of the development of land and animal ownership, control of local production which was the status indicator and symbol of power, and/or another form of wealth accumulation¹⁰⁷. It seems that the decisive stimulus that determined the position of Domasław was the inclusion of this region

¹⁰⁶ FERNÁNDEZ-GÖTZ/ARNOLD 2017, 186.

¹⁰⁷ MILCENT 2017, 104.

in the long-distance exchange system, and later active participation in this interregional distribution network. In the system of trade in goods and prestige, the acquisition of luxury items was an important factor ensuring the flow of goods between very different societies. The functioning of such a trade route required ensuring social and economic stability, which initiated and consequently led to the emergence of a centralised leadership system¹⁰⁸. This process can be most fully observed in the Alpine zone and in the culture of West Hallstatt, culminating in the emergence of centres of strong political and administrative power in the younger section of the Hallstatt period. Hierarchically organised societies were headed by chieftains who lived in fortified towns and were buried after death with unprecedented splendour in this part of Europe¹⁰⁹. The elites from Domasław probably controlled a part of the route, ensuring the continuity and security of exchange, drawing measurable benefits from it¹¹⁰. The position and status of this privileged group was largely dependent on the efficiency and regularity of the circulation of goods. Thanks to its control of the distribution network, this group was able to pursue material and ideological goals that secured it the obedience and respect of the other members of the community. A wide stream of objects of foreign provenance distributed among members of the community could also be based on the exchange of goods, wealth and products, which in archaic societies was a commitment guaranteed not by individuals, but by communities. Hence, a much larger group participated in the division of the fruits of this enterprise. Such a model of participation would, in today's meaning of the word, be more democratic and would not lead to extreme stratification, which seems to be manifested in the Hallstatt circle by the so-called "princely" graves. It should be emphasised, however, that such centres of "princely" power are formed only in the HD period, completing the process initiated at the beginning of the Iron Age, and even at the end of the Bronze Age. The location closer to the centres of Mediterranean civilisations could also make the process of social stratification faster there and reach deeper into the social life.

The intensive transfer of objects, ritual practices and ideas affected all spheres of life¹¹¹. This gave rise to a group that incorporated new elements of narration and visualisation into the existing funeral customs, highlighting and consolidating their role and developing new strategies to legitimise the elites. The instruments to achieve the above were economic domination (control of the influx of prestigious goods), a wide spectrum of subordinating behaviour (redistribution) and the creation of the ideological message in the world of *sacrum* (as in Domasław) and *profanum* (such as at the settlement of the Milejowice, located 12 km from Domasław). In the Hallstatt world, ideological issues may have functioned as a tool in organising and controlling the exchange. The consequence of this process was the emergence of a social class manifesting its position and role by, among others, grave goods and the new forms of distinguishing burials, such as above-ground constructions or ditches, which had a commemorative function, important in the process of heroisation of members of the leading stratum and maintaining the memory of the dead¹¹². Such manifestation also occurred through elements of the funeral performance and specific types of furnishing, such as weapons, including swords, which may indicate new economic forms of differentiation and control¹¹³. The organisation of the cemetery was subordinated to prestigious burials that shaped the structure of the necropolis (both in the Bronze Age and in the Hallstatt period).

The local elites in Domasław used graves and goods to show that they were not inferior to those from the Hallstatt zone. They were strongly influenced by the Hallstatt culture area, and

¹⁰⁸ FREIDIN 1982.

¹⁰⁹ FERNÁNDEZ-GÖTZ/ARNOLD 2017.

¹¹⁰ DZIĘGIELEWSKI 2017, 326; 2018, 86.

¹¹¹ KIMMIG 1983, 71; DIETLER 2006, 557.

¹¹² MIERZWIŃSKI 2013, 251.

¹¹³ MILCENT 2017.

could be regarded as part of it, but certain patterns of the Lusatian Urnfield Culture were maintained. They remained conservative in the exclusive practice of cremation, did not use *pars pro toto* depositions and fragmentation, did not bury wagons, and carried only one type of fibula – the harp-shaped fibula. At the same time, the similarities in grave goods between the burials are striking. They consistently buried dead in chambers, selected analogous banquet vessels sets, luxury objects, weaponry, parts of horse-gear, ornaments and toiletries, and used the practice of wrapping grave goods. The textiles in the graves in Domasław and wrapping the objects and urns also confirm the adaptation of the customs of the Hallstatt elites among the local community and treating them as one of the elements of the symbolic meaning of graves. The forms and décor of ceramics and the way of creating the sets correspond to the Hallstatt mode – unlike, e. g., in Świbie, where ceramics have local “Lusatian” traditions. Here, the change of grave goods and the idea of arrangement a funeral was comprehensive. The number of discovered ditches is impressive, emphasising the importance of the people buried in them, certainly another effect of Hallstatt influences. In graves No. 390 and 8905, large ribbed bronze bowls were deposited with the swords, that is, as in the case of the sumptuous burials under the Kröllkogel burial mounds in Kleinklein, there were sets of weapons and drinking equipment made of bronze and ceramics¹¹⁴. The percentage of well-equipped burials in Domasław, containing numerous imported items, especially swords, is astonishing and confirms extensive contacts with other centres of the time in the west and south of Europe on an unprecedented scale. Also, the number of items such as moon-shaped idols or toiletry sets surprises. Naturally, there are certain differences, which show that these burials were rooted in local funeral practices and thus ‘overcontextualised’ in a regionally specific way¹¹⁵. Elites from Domasław did not change the method of burial, which was cremation, but in a style incomparable to other Hallstatt places, they “imported” the lavish style of funeral feasts, in which the same rules were followed as in the Hallstatt culture zone.

The Hallstatt culture was not a unified entity, but rather a communication system, a conglomerate of multiple regionally limited cultural groups sharing basic similarities¹¹⁶. Perhaps it was organised on a more regional level, functioning in a network of intensive connections and interactions, but always with different scales and intensities, with economic and social differences. The Hallstatt culture should be perceived rather as a diverse amalgamation of various regional phenomena, trends, and characteristics, as a dynamic communication network, characterised by shared socio-economic foundations, direct interpersonal connections, and common cultural orientations. Cultural groups from this period were characterised by openness to cultural impulses in the material and ideological sphere. Numerous interactions of increasing intensity occurred, connecting elites and regions in Europe. In the Hallstatt period the region of present-day Silesia was the mainstay of civilisation against the background of the entire Lusatian culture, and the lavish style and wealth and its prestige consolidated the local communities. Along with the progressive integration of external phenomena, contacts, interactions, Silesia undoubtedly became a part of the Hallstatt world.

¹¹⁴ EGG / KRAMER 2005, 9; 2013.

¹¹⁶ WEISS 1999, 10–11.

¹¹⁵ VAN DER VAART-VERSCHOOF / SCHUMANN 2017, 21.

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Abstract: Funeral rites in the Bronze and Early Iron Ages in south-western Poland in regard to social changes

The Bronze Age and Early Iron Age cemetery in Domaślaw in present-day Silesia became a source for studies on funeral rites and various aspects of cultural practices and culture change. The observed changes are the reference point for correlating the features distinguished at this necropolis with other sites in the vicinity and more distant areas. The accumulation of elements of burial practices of Hallstatt origin indicate the important role of the community in the region. Similarities between the Hallstatt culture area and Silesia suggest that geographically separated groups were incorporated into a specific elite burial practice. They lead to the concept of treating south-western Poland as a regional, north-eastern province of the Hallstatt culture.

Zusammenfassung: Bestattungssitten in der Bronze- und frühen Eisenzeit im südwestlichen Polen im Hinblick auf sozialen Wandel

Das bronzezeitliche und früheisenzeitliche Gräberfeld von Domasław im heutigen Schlesien ist eine Quelle für Untersuchungen zu Bestattungssitten und verschiedenen Aspekten kultureller Praktiken und des kulturellen Wandels. Die beobachteten Veränderungen sind der Ausgangspunkt für den Vergleich von Befunden, die in dieser Nekropole dokumentiert wurden, mit solchen anderer Fundorte in der Region und in entfernteren Gebieten. Die Vielfalt an Elementen von Bestattungspraktiken, die einen Ursprung im Gebiet der Hallstattkultur haben, verweist auf die wichtige Rolle dieser Gemeinschaft in dieser Region. Ähnlichkeiten zwischen dem Gebiet der Hallstattkultur und Schlesien deuten darauf hin, dass geographisch getrennte Gruppen in spezifische Elitebestattungspraktiken eingebunden waren. Dies führt uns zum Konzept, das südwestliche Polen als eine regionale, nordöstliche Provinz der Hallstattkultur zu betrachten.

Résumé : Pratiques funéraires à l'âge du Bronze et au début de l'âge du Fer dans le sud-ouest de la Pologne en contexte de transformations sociales

La nécropole de l'âge du Bronze et du début de l'âge du Fer à Domasław dans l'actuelle Silésie est devenue une source importante pour des études portant sur les rites funéraires ainsi que sur différents aspects liés aux pratiques culturelles et aux transformations culturelles. Les transformations observées constituent le point de départ pour mettre les structures identifiées dans cette nécropole en corrélation avec d'autres sites dans un environnement proche tout comme dans des régions plus lointaines. L'accumulation d'éléments liés aux pratiques funéraires d'origine hallstattienne témoignent de l'importance du rôle joué à l'époque par cette communauté au sein de la région. Des similitudes entre l'aire occupée par la culture de Hallstatt et la Silésie laissent à penser que des groupes séparés sur plan géographique étaient intégrés au sein d'une pratique funéraire destinée aux élites. Par conséquent, le sud-ouest de la Pologne doit être considéré comme une province régionale de la culture de Hallstatt dans sa partie nord-est.

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