

II. MATERIAŁY – MATERIALS

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A BROOCH FROM WROCLAW AREA. A CONTRIBUTION TO THE RESEARCH ON THE MIGRATION PERIOD IN SOUTH-WEST POLAND

ZAPINKA Z OKOLIC WROCLAWIA. PRZYCZYNEK DO BADAŃ NAD OKRESEM WĘDRÓWEK LUDÓW W POŁUDNIOWO-ZACHODNIEJ POLSCE

Abstract: In spring 2012 in the area of the village of Krzyżowice, approximately 15 km SW of Wrocław, an accidental discovery of a brooch was made. The brooch's bow is cast in bronze, while the preserved fragments of the pin and spring were made of iron. Currently, the length of the artefact is 5 cm, but originally it was probably approximately 5.5 cm, because the base which is slightly curved upwards, was initially straight. All similar brooches come from the territory of the Thuringia tribe in the 5th/6th century AD, namely Thuringia and Bohemia. Such a dating places the brooch among the group of artefacts representing the youngest chronological horizon of the Przeworsk cultural area.

Keywords: Late Migration Period, SW-Poland, Thuringia brooch.

1. INTRODUCTION

In spring 2012 on land of Krzyżowice village approximately 15 km SW from Wrocław city limits (Fig. 1) an accidental discovery of a brooch was made. The artefact was on the ground surface, in a place indicated in the archives of conservation services as an archaeological site 6 at Krzyżowice, which chronology, based on pottery fragments found in the topsoil was determined as the late Roman period. It is difficult to determine the nature of the site. It covers a small, flat elevation within completely flat area of Wrocław Plain, and its relative altitude does not exceed 2 m. Given the location, it can be assumed that it is a burial ground, however in the archive of the archaeological heritage preservation service it is considered as a settlement. Without the excavations, at least in form of test trenches, it is only a speculation, though. It is therefore necessary excavation on the site, preceded by prospection using non-invasive methods. The brooch, however, is such

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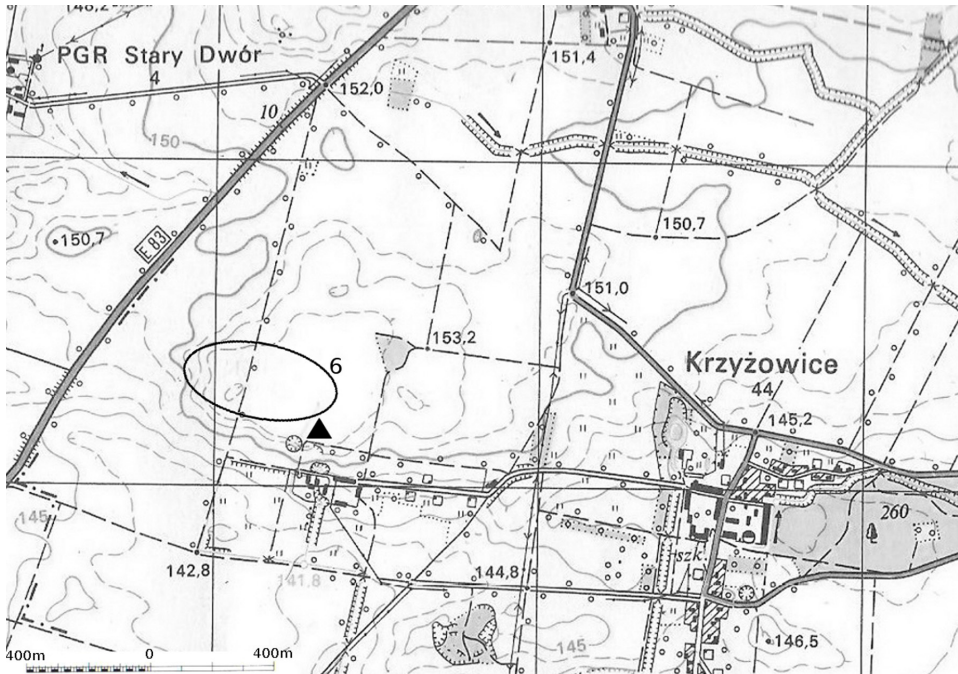


Fig. 1. Krzyżowice, Wrocław district, Lower Silesia, site 6. Localization of the brooch from Late Migration period. Drawn by W. Wierzbicki

an interesting and unique specimen that it is worth an immediate publication and an attempt to establish its dating and origins.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ARTEFACT

The brooch's bow is cast in bronze, pin and spring, preserved fragments, were made of iron. Currently the length of the artefact is 5 cm, but originally it was probably approximately 5.5 cm, because the foot, slightly curved upwards, was initially straight (Fig. 2-4). The bow is slightly flattened at the sides, arch-shaped, with the letter D shape in cross-section. The flat head has a form resembling somewhat a fish tail (Fig. 2, 4). The foot, also flattened, is 8-shaped, almost volute. The brooch is decorated with eyes motif, three on the head and two on the foot.

The artefact underwent a chemical composition analysis, carried out by Dr Eng. Beata Miazga from the Laboratory of Conservation and Archaeometry of the Institute of Archaeology of the University of Wrocław. The bow's composition was: 83.9% Cu, 2.1% Zn, 0.2% As, 0.5% Ag, 8.5% Sn, 3.9% Pb. Iron fragments of the brooch were not analyzed due to the large degree of their oxidation.

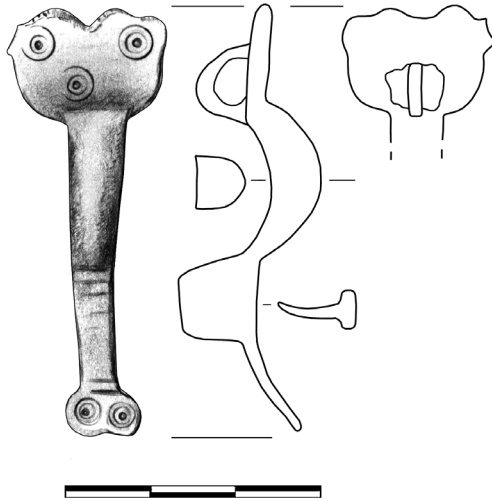


Fig. 2. Krzyżowice, Wrocław district, site 6. The brooch from Late Migration Period. Drawn by N. Lenkow

3. ANALOGIES

Specimens similar to the brooch in question from Poland are not known to me. However, similarities to quite a number of artefacts from neighbouring countries can be found. The closest analogy is a brooch from settlement discovered in Nová Ves u Kolína in the central Czech Republic, both in terms of artefact's shape and decoration (Droberjar 2008a, Fig. 5: 9). In the same style are made also other items, although they are not so close to the specimen from Wrocław. These are: brooch from grave 41 in burial ground Praha-Podbaba (Droberjar 2008a, Fig. 5:10) and from grave 27 on the same site (*ibid.*, Fig. 5: 8). All 3 specimens are bimetallic, i.e. bows were cast in bronze, and springs in iron. By E. Droberjar they are included to the group of Thuringian brooches from the Migration period (Droberjar 2008a, 7-8).

Very close in terms of form is a specimen, which was relatively recently discovered using metal detector in Ladná near Břeclav. It has a length of 5 cm, hence almost identical to the artefact in question (Jílek i Jiřík 2008). It belongs to so-called Thuringian tongs-shaped (pincers-shaped) brooches. There is also a similarity between the Krzyżowice artefact and brooch from settlement in Jenštejn near Prague (Droberjar 2008c), which is listed amongst the artefacts of foreign origins found in the Czech Republic. This is a Saxony brooch of Bordesholm-Hasliengfield type (see Droberjar 2008c, p. 182, Fig. 103: 14). Brooch's distinctive decoration



Fig. 3. Krzyżowice, Wrocław district, site 6. The brooch from Late Migration Period. Photo by B. Miazga

in the form of concentric circles draws special attention. The same motif can also be seen on the first of mentioned above analogous specimen, although it is less visible. Identical circles instead were placed on brooch from grave 3 in burial ground Lochenice IX (Droberjar 2008a, Fig. 5:11; 2008b, Fig. 5:11). The brooch occurred in an assemblage with, amongst others, a comb decorated with the same circles.

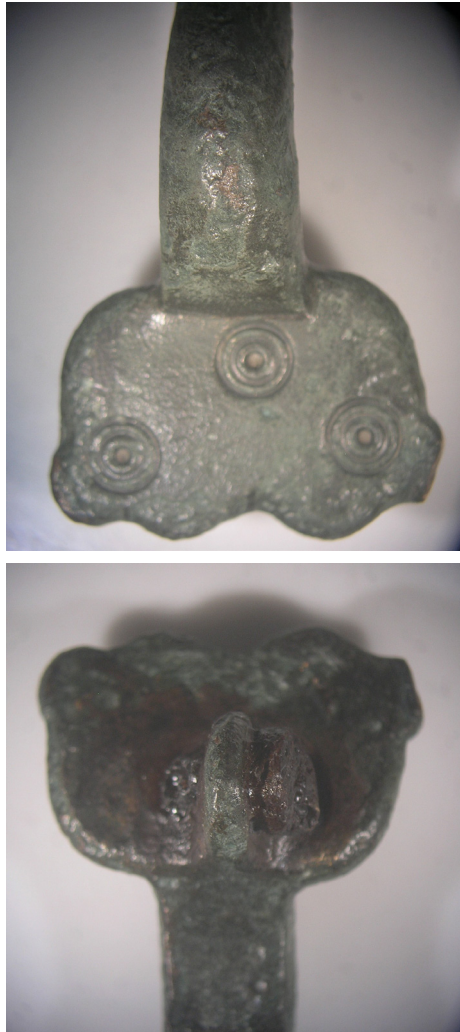


Fig. 4. Krzyżowice, Wrocław district, site 6.
The head of the brooch from Late Migration
Period. Photo by B. Miazga

Also from the middle Danube River area are known brooches made in similar style. Here should be mentioned above all specimens from Ringelsdorf and Bernhardstahl in Lower Austria (Tejral 2002, 329, Fig. 10: 1, 6), related to Langobardic settlement. Close to the discussed artifact is also a specimen from Ladná, distr. Břeclav (Tejral 2012, 52, Fig. 13: A6), which, by J. Tejral is included to Elbe-Germanic brooches group (Tejral 2012, 54), which term was used by the Moravian researcher after J. Bemmann (2008, 149).

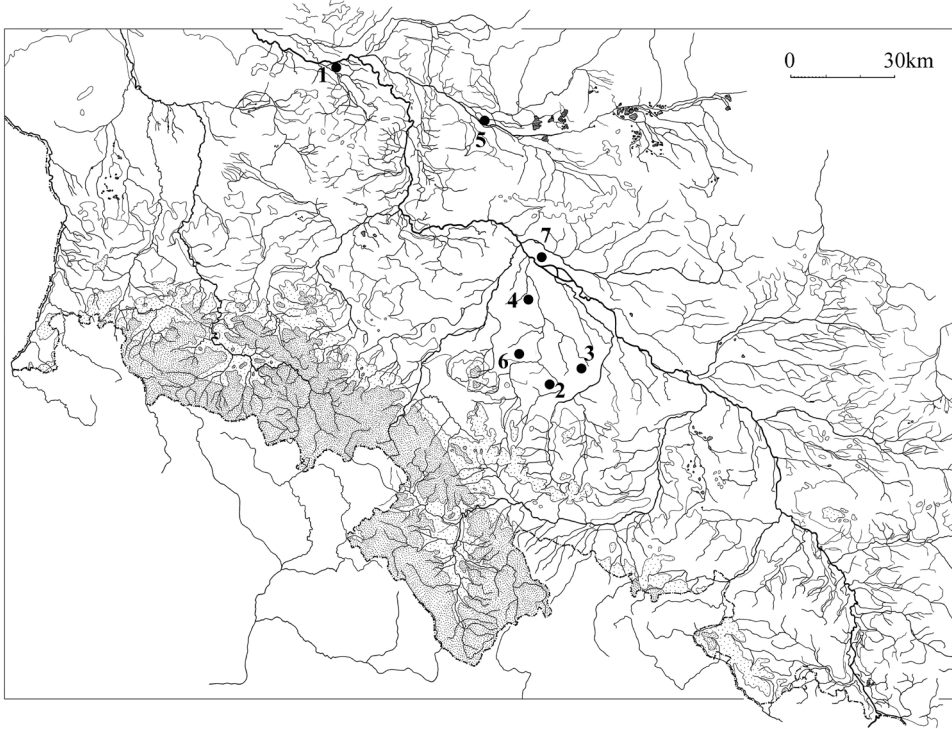


Fig. 5. The sites from 5th century and the beginning of the 6th century AD in Lower Silesia 1 – Bytnik, 2 – Górzec, 3 – Jędrzychowice, 4 – Krzyżowice, 5 – Ługi, 6 – Tyniec n. Ślęzą, 7 – Wrocław-Rędzin. Drawn by A. Błażejowski

Very similar specimens, made in the same style, are known, obviously, from the area of central Germany. An artifact from woman's grave No. 1 from Leuna, Kr. Merseburg has a somewhat similar form, but above all is decorated with circles on the head and foot (Schmidt 1976, Table 66: 3c). In turn, somewhat similar shape, but definitely different decoration has a brooch from Rathewitz, Kr. Naumburg (Schmidt 1976, Table 96: 4f). Similar to the discussed brooch is also the one from grave 79 in Stößen (Schmidt 1970 Table 55b). This specimen and the other similar to it are included to so-called tongs-shaped brooches (German *Zangenfibeln*), like some specimens, mentioned earlier, from the Czech Basin. A very interesting analogous artefact publishes J. Bemann. It is a specimen from Funen, which head is similar to the the specimen from Wrocław area, but the foot is formed differently. It is the northernmost located find amongst those, which in terms of form resemble the specimen in question. In general, this type of brooches, as previously mentioned, is called by J. Bemann the Elbe-Germanic one (Bemann 2008, 149).

The largest clusters of finds occurs in Thuringia and the Czech Basin (Schmidt 1970, 124, Fig. 55a; 1983, 537, Fig. 166). According to E. Droberjar such a distribution of these brooches, as well as other artefacts, certifies migration of Germanic tribes along the Elbe River to the middle Danube River area in the second half of the 5th century (Droberjar 2008b, 144, Fig. 10). He also puts forward the hypothesis of controlling by the Thuringii tribe the area of the Czech Basin within one state organism (Droberjar 2008a, 2, Fig. 1), which would be a separate 'province' of this state.

The brooch in question, as mentioned earlier, is the artefact unique in the scale of the Oder and Vistula rivers basin. To date, only one specimen of Thuringian brooch from current Polish territory is known from Suchań in West Pomerania (Bursche 2014). However, it represents the so-called animal style, which decoration is much more complex than is the case of find from Wrocław area. The Suchań brooch was found together with a hoard of gold items, including Scandinavian bracteates as well as a brooch of Bornholm type. A. Bursche is inclined to date the brooch from Pomerania to phase D2 – the end of 5th century AD. (Bursche 2014, 56), i.e. to the end of the early Migration period. At this time Pomerania was occupied by population of the Dębczyno group, which finds of late chronology, reaching even the 6th century, are numerous (see Machajewski 1992, 191).

4. CHRONOLOGY

All listed here brooches, close in terms of form and style to the discussed one from Lower Silesia are dated to the advanced stage of the Migration period. In case of the Czech Republic, their chronology after E. Droberjar can be determined as phase E1, i.e. 480-530, hence the turn of the 5th/6th century (Droberjar 2008a, 9; 2008b, 138). This phase, due to its characteristic artefacts corresponding to the area of central Germany or directly originating from there, is called the Thuringian phase. It roughly corresponds to phase MD 3 after Hansen (2004) and phase IIb after Schmidt (1961) for central Germany. It is more or less correlated with so-called 'Elbe-Germanic phase' after J. Bemann, which according to this researcher should be dated from 450 to 480/500 (Bemann 2008, 149). This phase corresponds also to phase E after J. Tejral (2005; 2007) for the areas of the middle Danube, which is dated to 480-510.

It seems, therefore, an indisputable matter that the artefact should be dated to the turn of the 5th/6th century. Even taking into account only the older section of this period, i.e. the end of the 5th century, the brooch ranks amongst the youngest finds in the area of the Przeworsk culture.

5. SETTLEMENT AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Such a dating places the brooch in the group of artefacts representing definitely the youngest chronological horizon of the Przeworsk culture area (Fig. 5). It is therefore, contemporaneous with very few artefacts, which were several times analyzed by M. Mączyńska as the ones marking the decline of the Przeworsk Culture (Mączyńska 1998; 1999). From Lower Silesia here may be mentioned actually only the stray find of necklace inlaid with almandines or garnets, perhaps linked to a burial ground from Wrocław-Rędzin (Grempler 1900), although, its chronology probably should be determined as slightly earlier, i.e. the first half of the 5th century. Identically as the find in question should be dated a radiate-headed brooch from Górzec, Strzelin district (Petersen 1936, 53, Fig. 17). Two more sites dated at the half of 5th century are: grave at Ługi, Góra district (Petersen 1932, 158) and Hunnic grave at Jędrzychowice, Strzelin district (Krause 1904).

It should be clearly stated, however, that at least some of findings concerning this youngest settlement horizon in south-west Poland, known from prior publications seem to lose their value. This is primarily due to the fact that to the artefacts listed here marking the youngest horizon of prehistoric settlement in the region, continue to add new discoveries. For example, recently an unpublished inhumation burial ground (with difficult to estimate size) was encountered in Tyniec nad Ślężą. According to T. Gralak who studies these materials, its chronology should be determined to phase D2 of the Migration period (T. Gralak, personal communication). It seems that in the same time as discussed artefact should be placed a settlement feature being currently studied by the author of this article from Bytnik, Głogów district, within which was found a double-sided comb made of antler, dated exactly to the turn of the 5th and the 6th century (M. Diakowski, personal communication).

It has to be mentioned, that those finds of separate character are not related, as far as we know, to the coin finds with so late chronology. The only piece from this time comes from Górzec, near Strzelin – solidus of Valentinian III 425-455 AD (Ciołek 2008, 79).

The site in Krzyżowice and the burial ground in Tyniec are located in the Bystrzyca-Oława rivers region of the Przeworsk culture settlement, while the last mentioned find from Bytnik is associated with the Głogów region (Pazda 1980, 16, 17). Within both regions relatively late dated sites were recorded, although they were mainly related to phase D1, i.e. the early phase of the Migration period.

It is not clear whether to the same cultural horizons may also be included sites dated to the 6th century recently discovered by B. Gruszka in the western border of Silesia and Greater Poland, from which material useful for dendrochronological dating was obtained (Gruszka 2011). It seems, however, that materials acquired from these sites, despite stylistic archaic features, are slightly younger.

Anyway, from the south-west Poland, as mentioned earlier, is known an increasing number of sites and stray finds, which chronology should be placed at the turn

of the 5th/6th century. Unfortunately, a large part of them is not published yet. It seems that they evidence an existence of some settlement cluster here, which originated at least in the early stages of the Migration period and survived until the beginning of the late phase of this period. Based on not numerous finds of this type it is difficult to judge the nature and size of this cluster, it may be, however, similar to the well-known finds' concentration from the Prosna River area in Janków Drugi (Petersen 1939, 77-79, 119-121; Godłowski 1985, 125).

On several occasions I have had the opportunity to comment on the possible continuation of settlement and cultural similarities between the late antiquity and the beginning of the early Middle Ages in the area of present-day south-west Poland (Błażejowski 2012; 2013). I am still of opinion of possibility of surviving in this area settlement clusters of ancient provenance, probably of enclaves nature. Both the find discussed here, as well as the other aforementioned unpublished to date artefacts, force to think seriously about the scale of this settlement.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Observations made above, concerning the interesting specimen of brooch from Krzyżowice near Wrocław lead to articulate quite precise conclusions. Firstly, the typological-classification analysis of the artefact allow to consider it confidently as belonging to the brooches' group called 'Elbe-Germanic', within the broad category of the Thuringian brooches. The closest analogies come from the upper and middle Elbe River basin, from the Thuringii environment, or from areas under strong influence of this tribe.

The brooch should be dated to the turn of the 5th/6th century. Its presence in the Bystrzyca-Oława rivers region documents surviving of the settlement with origins probably dating back to the late Roman period in this area. Moreover, it clearly demonstrates cultural links between the upper Odra River basin and the Elbe River basin. The scale and intensity of these contacts cannot be evaluated, due to the insufficient number of finds at our disposal.

Because of the fact that the brooch in question probably comes from a settlement, it should be postulated undertaking excavations on this site. Find of brooch of so late chronology on site to date determined as related to the late Roman period clearly indicates the need to verify similar sites, especially settlements. Some of them could prove to be complexes functioning even for many decades. It would be worthwhile also to isolate in the area in question settlement clusters, grouping both burial grounds and settlements as well as possibly production sites. Such possibilities are created, above all, by so-called non-invasive archaeological penetration methods.

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A BROOCH FROM WROCLAW AREA. A CONTRIBUTION TO THE RESEARCH ON THE MIGRATION PERIOD IN SOUTH-WEST POLAND

Streszczenie

Wiosną 2012 r. na gruntach miejscowości Krzyżowice ok. 15 km na południowy zachód od Wrocławia dokonano przypadkowego odkrycia zapinki. Zabytek znajdował się na powierzchni gruntu, w miejscu oznaczonym w archiwum służb konserwatorskich jako stanowisko archeologiczne, którego chronologię na podstawie fragmentów ceramiki zalegającej w humusie określono na późny okres rzymski. Konieczna jest eksploracja stanowiska, poprzedzona prospekcją przy zastosowaniu metod nieinwazyjnych. Fibula jest na tyle ciekawym i wyjątkowym okazem, że już teraz warto dokonać jej publikacji oraz podjąć próbę dokładniejszej analizy jej datowania i pochodzenia.

Kabłąk zapinki odlany jest z brązu, igła i zachowana fragmentarycznie sprężynka były żelazne. Obecnie długość przedmiotu wynosi 5 cm, pierwotnie było to zapewne ok. 5,5 cm. Kabłąk jest lekko spłaszczony po bokach, ukształtowany łukowato, ma przekrój litery D. Płaska główka ma formę przypominającą nieco rybi ogon. Nóżka, również spłaszczona, ma kształt ósemkowaty, niemal wolutowy. Zapinkę ozdobiono oczkami, trzema na główce i dwoma na nóżce.

Zabytek został poddany analizie składu chemicznego, którą wykonała dr inż. Beata Miazga z pracowni Konserwacji i Archeometrii Instytutu Archeologii Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego. Skład kabłąka przedstawiał się następująco: 83,9% Cu, 2,1% Zn, 0,2% As, 0,5% Ag, 8,5% Sn, 3,9% Pb. Żelaznych fragmentów zapinki nie badano ze względu na zbyt duże ich utlenienie.

Zabytek ma liczne analogie, rozproszone przede wszystkim w środkowym i górnym dorzeczu Łaby (w Turynii i Kotlinie Czeskiej). Pod względem stylistycznym mieści się w grupie tzw. zapinek nadłabsko-germańskich, związanych z wytwórstwem turyńskim. Na podstawie tychże analogii pod względem chronologicznym zapinkę należy umieszczać na przełomie V i VI w., najpewniej w latach 480-510, a zatem w fazie E1 wydzielonej przez E. Droberjara dla obszaru Czech. Pojawienie się zabytku o takiej proveniencji jest na pewno przejawem kontaktów obszaru dzisiejszej południowo-zachodniej Polski z terenami opanowanymi przez plemię Turyngów w późnym okresie wędrówek ludów.

Takie datowanie umieszcza fibulę w grupie zabytków reprezentujących zdecydowanie najmłodszy horyzont chronologiczny obszaru kultury przeworskiej. Jest zatem współczesna niewielu zabytkom, wyznaczającym schyłek kultury przeworskiej. Z Dolnego Śląska można tu wymienić właściwie jedynie znalezisko luźne naszyjnika z almandynami lub granatami, być może związane z cmentarzyskiem z Wrocławia-Rędzina, choć najpewniej należy jego chronologię określić na czas nieco wcześniejszy, tj. na pierwszą połowę V wieku. Tak samo natomiast jak omawiane znalezisko należy datować trójpalczałą zapinkę z Górzca, pow. Strzelin.

Obecność omawianej fibuli na obszarze międzyczecza Bystrzycy i Oławy dokumentuje długie przeżywanie się osadnictwa o genezie sięgającej najpewniej późnego okresu rzymskiego na tym obszarze. Ponadto dowodzi jednoznacznie związków kulturowych dorzecza górnej Odry z obszarem Nadłabia. Skala i intensywność tych kontaktów nie mogą być ocenione ze względu na zbyt małą liczbę znalezisk, jakimi dysponujemy.