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CONTENTS

EDITORS' FOREWORD	5
Jacek Górski, THE FOUNDATIONS OF TRZCINIEC CULTURE TAXONOMY IN WESTERN MAŁOPOLSKA	7
Przemysław Makarowicz, TAXONOMIC FOUNDATIONS OF THE TRZCINIEC CULTURAL CIRCLE ON THE LOWER VISTULA	19
Halina Taras, THE BASES FOR THE TAXONOMY OF THE TRZCINIEC CULTURE IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE AREA BETWEEN THE VISTULA AND BUG RIVERS	32
Victor I. Klochko, THE ISSUE OF THE EASTERN BORDER OF THE EASTERN TRZCINIEC CULTURE (LOBOIKIVKA METALLURGY)	48
Marcin Ignaczak, Przemysław Makarowicz, THE SOUTH-WESTERN BORDERLAND OF THE TRZCINIEC CULTURAL CIRCLE	74
Vasyl Y. Kurylenko, Vitaliy V. Otroshchenko, THE SOSNYTSA CULTURE OF THE DESNA AREA AND ITS LINKS WITH EASTERN NEIGHBOURS	87
Mykola Kryvaltsevich, THE PROBLEMS OF IDENTIFICATION AND ORIGINS OF "TRZCINIEC" IN THE PRYPETS BASIN	103
Jacek Górski, THE QUESTION OF THE DECLINE OF TRZCINIEC CULTURE IN WESTERN MAŁOPOLSKA. TRZCINIEC CULTURE VS. LUSATIAN CULTURE	115
Nikolay Kovalyukh, Vadim Skripkin, Victor I. Klochko, Sergey Lysenko, ABSOLUTE (RADIOCARBON) CHRONOLOGY OF THE EASTERN TRZCINIEC CULTURE IN THE DNIEPER BASIN (THE MAŁOPOŁOVETSKE BURIAL SITE)	130
Przemysław Makarowicz, ABSOLUTE CHRONOLOGY OF THE TRZCINIEC COMPLEX IN THE VISTULA DRAINAGE IN THE LIGHT OF ¹⁴ C DATINGS	141
Sławomir Kadrow, THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN DIMENSION OF THE DECLINE OF THE EARLY BRONZE AGE CIVILIZATION. THE TRZCINIEC SOCIO-CULTURAL SYSTEM AT THE OUTSET OF ITS CAREER	156
Janusz Czebreszuk, "TRZCINIEC". AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW	165

Aleksander Koško, Victor I. Klochko, "TRZCINIEC" — BORDERLAND OF EARLY BRONZE CIVILIZATIONS OF EASTERN AND WESTERN EUROPE?	190
References	203
List of Authors	224

Editor's Foreword

The Trzciniec Culture, Trzciniec Cultural Circle and Trzciniec Horizon are the names of a cultural area in the borderland of Western and Eastern Europe at the 2nd millennium BC. For over half a century a discussion has been going on over the taxonomic identification (chronological and spatial) and genetic and ethnic interpretation of this cultural unit.

In the debate, the 1980's and 1990's mark a significant cognitive turn caused by the growth of the corpus of sources, the use of systematic methods for the study of mobile sources and the proliferation of regional ^{14}C datings.

The present volume of "Baltic-Pontic Studies" is an attempt to register this breakthrough and a proposal for a new fitting of the Trzciniec phenomenon into the synthesis of Early Bronze Age Europe. The records include rudiments of new regional systematizations, foundations of their chronologies based on radiocarbon datings and a discussion of the mechanisms of socio-cultural changes which gave rise to the Trzciniec cultural area and later contributed to its disintegration.

A long-term intention of this volume giving a multifaceted view of the effects of the said cognitive breakthrough is to encourage a careful scrutiny of the development mechanisms of the European Early Bronze Age Civilization, in particular the role played in them by the societies inhabiting the drainages of the Baltic and Pontic Seas.

Editorial comment

1. All dates in the *B-PS* are calibrated [see: *Radiocarbon* vol.28, 1986, and the next volumes]. Deviations from this rule will be point out in notes.

2. The names of the archaeological cultures (especially from the territory of the Ukraine) are standarized according to the English literature on the subject [e.g. Mallory 1989]. In the case of a new term, the author's original name has been retained.

3. The place names located in the Ukraine have been transliterat from the versions suggested by the author (i.e. from the Belorussian, Ukrainian, Polish or Russian originals).

Aleksander Koško, Victor I. Klochko

“TRZCINIEC” — BORDERLAND OF EARLY BRONZE CIVILIZATIONS OF EASTERN AND WESTERN EUROPE?

Among many controversial issues brought forth by the taxonomic image of “Trzciniec” outlined in the works of A. Gardawski and his methodological successors topogenetic arguments in favor of this hypothetical communication community (in the quoted works called a set of “tribes”) [Gardawski 1959] are especially conspicuous. The community supposedly occupied an extensive territory from the drainage of the Oder in the west to the drainage of the Desna in the east, possibly extending to the Urals [Berezanskaya 1972:190 — a maximalist view; cf. an opposing point of view: Artemenko 1987]. In our opinion such arguments should include (1) a documentation of the genetic background of the development of a system of cultural pattern circulation within the said territory as well as (2) an indication of the generators of its hypothetical periodical stabilization (“ethnization”). We are going to devote some space to these issues by drawing a general framework for discussion. The adopted point of view makes us perceive some taxonomic units rather as a reflection of real changes, which, in turn, justifies a different use of such terms as “Trzciniec Culture” (cf. working term “Trzciniec”) or “Early Bronze” (cf. “Early Bronze Age Civilizations”).

1. THE SO-CALLED BORDERLAND COMMUNITY AS “TRZCINIEC’S” GENETIC BACKGROUND

In the traditional picture of the early agrarian Europe, specifically of its plain or taiga covered expanses between the Oder and Desna — prior to the emergence of “Trzciniec” — a clear cultural division was observed running along the so-called Bug and Dniester physiographic borderline [Koško 1981]. Areas lying to the west of this line were exploited by Neolithic communities representing the Bal-

kan-Central-European cultural province, whereas territories east of the line were home for sub-Neolithic communities associated with the province of forest-East-European cultures. Hence, it can be concluded that an assumption was made about two different systems of cultural information circulation in existence in this zone. The two systems stemmed from different — also topogenetically — traditions of the reception of early agrarian civilizational experience. Consequently, the outlined cultural background did not justify a later development, at the outset of the 2nd millennium BC, of a macrospatial synthesis of “Trzciniec”. It must be added that, facing inadequate accuracy of synchronization of the Bronze Age systematizations in the catchment areas of the Pontic and Baltic seas and a lack of relevant ^{14}C datings of early “Trzciniec” materials [cf. Kovalyukh et al., *Absolute (Radiocarbon) Chronology...*, in this volume], the question of the development of the synthesis could not be solved in a methodologically satisfying manner.

The seeds of revision of the picture of history commented above can be seen in the development of research into the Comb-like and Stroked range of the Forest East European Province. This is especially true for the western group of the range [Telegin 1968:223], specifically the Nemen Culture (NC) and in part the Kiev-Volhynia group of the Dnieper-Donets Culture (D-DC) [Cherniavskiy 1979; Isaenko 1976; Telegin 1968]. It was there that, beginning from the late 1970's, a horizon (phases II and especially III of NC) of a strong influence of “western” cultures was distinguished. By “western” cultures it is meant here mainly Balkan Central European cultures like Funnel Beaker (TRB) and later Globular Amphora (GAC) ones, Fig. 1:6. In the works of P.M. Dolukhanov, V.P. Tretyakov [1979], M.M. Cherniavskiy [1979] and V.F. Isaenko [1976] one can find opinions that the development of the communities of the western fringes of the indicated range underwent a considerable transformation due to the reception of external patterns which were genetically foreign. The watershed marking the beginnings of the said Occidentalization should be dated on the basis of the cited classifications by P.M. Dolukhanov, W. Tretyakov and V.F. Isayenko, who placed it in the middle of the 4th millennium BC (from phase IIB of the Neolithic in Polesie according to V.F. Isaenko). In both cases, however, we deal with indirect dating, i.e. through the Central European scale of TRB and GAC development. Our own observations [Koško 1994; 1996] make us accept or even expand the interpretation.

The acceptance refers to the degree of infusion of the materials of the Sośnia phase of the NC with “Central European” patterns [Kempisty 1983:179]. In fact, the state of syncretization determined by E. Kempisty [1973] for the far-western (Vistula) branch of the NC — as the Linin type — can be found also in other materials of this taxon in the drainages of the Upper Nemen and Pripets Rivers (also our own observations of collections held in Minsk). However, there are no relevant analytical studies of the intensity of this phenomenon, in relation to time and space, which prevents us from drawing any specific conclusions.

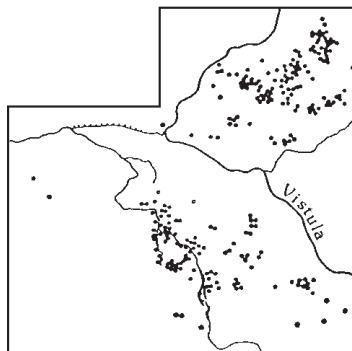
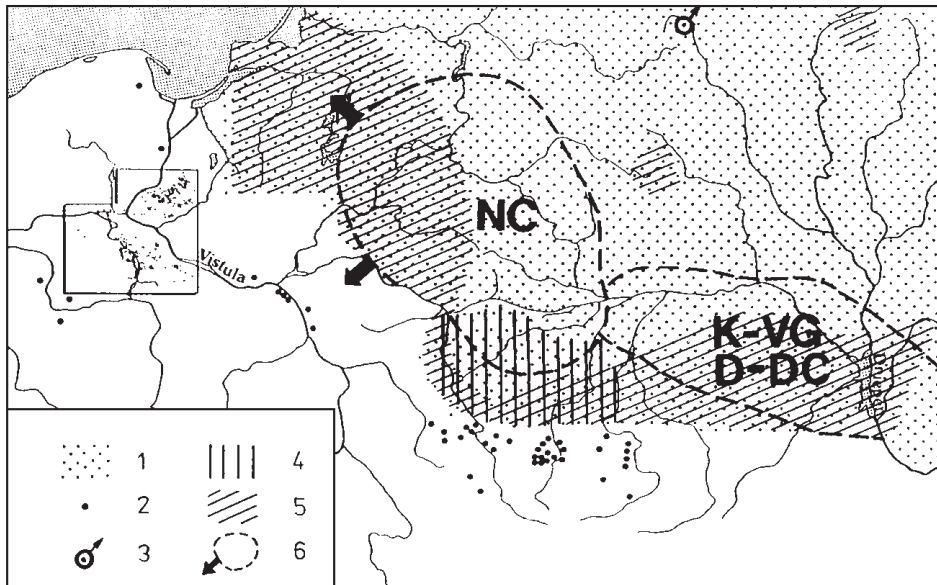


Fig. 1. Western frontier of the East European taiga. Reception ranges of Balkan-Central European cultural traditions. 1 - taiga limit (forest zone); 2 - settlement points of the Linear Pottery Culture in the borderland of the taiga; 3 - hypothetical zone of the settlement penetration of the taiga interior by the Linear Pottery Culture (Pskov region); 4 - regions of settlement penetration by the Funnel Beaker Culture; 5 - regions of settlement penetration by the Globular Amphora Culture; 6 - cultural units with a strong participation of Balkan-Central-European traditions (NC = Nemen Culture, K-VG D-DC = Kiev-Volhynia group of the Dnieper-Donets Culture).

The expansion of the interpretation relates to the more recent studies of the very origins of the western branch (“Vistula Dnieper Group”) of the Comb-like and Stroked sub-Neolithic. In the “classic” interpretation its sources were traced to the synthesis of the cultural traditions of the local Mesolithic and the Southern Bug-Dniester Culture (BDC) [Telegin 1968:49; Danilenko 1969:189-190], in the result of which a cycle of early ceramic taxa was to come into being, including the Dubichay and Sienchyce-Sokołów types in the drainages of the Pripets and Vistula. Taking into consideration more recent assessments of accessibility of the Linear Pottery Culture (LBK) to the taiga on the right bank of the Dnieper, it becomes justified to reduce the role of the BDC in the process [cf. Koško 1996], i.e. including the territory in the framework of the Central European circulation of early agrarian cultural patterns. By no means does it mean an obliteration of the economic and social peculiarity of the development of local communities, namely their specific “East European” manner of neolithization (Fig. 1:2).

Keeping in mind what has been said above, it may be suggested that beginning already from 5000 BC, i.e. from the LBK colonization of the western fringes of the taiga or possibly occasional penetration of its interior, which must have happened some time later [data from the Pskov region: studies by A.M. Miklayev and his team, cf. Koško 1994; 1996] (Fig. 1:3), the area between the Vistula and Dnieper reveals germs of a certain peculiar cultural community. By reason of its location at the Bug-Dniester frontier, the community may be called a “borderland community”. Archaeologically more visible signs of this phenomenon come only from the period after ca 3600/3500 BC (cf. earlier comments on the opinions of Belorussian and Russian researchers on the occidentalization of development of the NC and D-DC).

2. “THE BORDERLAND COMMUNITY”. AN OUTLINE OF THE INITIAL PHASE OF DEVELOPMENT (PRE-TRZCINIEC STAGE: 3600/3500 — 1900 BC)

In this stage two phases can be distinguished: **(a)** the occidentalization of the Vistula-Dnieper branch of the Comb-like and Stroked cultural range and **(b)** two-way transformations of the cultural environments of the Central European Plain and the East European taiga. The division into the said phases was marked by the beginning of a greater influx of NC societies into territories west of the Vistula (i.e. after 3200/3100 BC).

a. In the period 3600/3500 — 3200/3100 BC one can observe a process of colonization of the western fringe of the taiga by the TRB (Fig. 1:4). This is particularly clearly visible in the drainage of the Upper Pripets and to a lesser degree in the

Nemen drainage. Taking into account the fact that the TRB reached the Upper Bug about 3850/3700 BC, one can assume that soon afterwards (ca 3600/3500 BC) it appeared west of the “Bug-Dniester frontier” reaching the drainage of the Horyn River.

There are no absolute datings available of TRB materials from the interior of the taiga (e.g. from the region of the Upper Pripets). Certain clues are provided by stylistic datings of sources from Zedmar and Dutka [Gumiński, Fiedorczuk 1988] which can be generally called “Wiórek-type” (i.e. corresponding to the turn of phases IIIB/IIIC in Kujawy around 3600/3500 BC).

An assessment of the civilizational effects of the settlement activity has been presented in the quoted works by Russian and Belorussian scholars. This picture may be expanded by identifying the whole NC as culturally syncretic societies that related in many respects to the Balkan-Central European traditions.

In the same period, however, we do not observe any larger migrations in the opposite direction, i.e. from the taiga into the drainages of the Vistula and Oder. We leave out, naturally, the borderland zone which comprises the Warsaw Basin and Chełmno Land, where the impact of “Comb-like and Stroked” societies can be observed relatively early [Kukawka 1991].

b. The situation is changed after 3200/3100 BC. TRB colonizers in the taiga are substituted by GAC societies around that time [cf. Szmyt 1996]. The most recent studies of the chronology of the said process show that it took place primarily between 2950 and 2350 BC. The GAC reached as far as Smoleńsk (2476 ± 126 BC) and its impact can be easily observed in settlements in the taiga on the Dnieper (Middle Dnieper Culture), Fig. 1:5. At the same time, however, certain “forest” typological factors from the circle of the Vistula GAC show that some participants of its “eastern exodus” returned to the areas of departure [Koško 1990:316]. A deeper understanding of these processes may be of crucial importance for “community” interpretations of the societies of the Vistula-Dnieper range.

Another course of cultural information flow from the west into the taiga involved colonization by the circumbaltic Corded Ware Culture (CWC), closely related to the traditions of the Single Grave Culture (SGC) or more precisely to a widely chartered range where the impact of this group was felt [Koško 1994; Czebreszuk 1996:93ff.]. After 2900/2750 BC, a number of cultural systems from the drainages of the Nemen, Dvina, Upper Dnieper or even the Volga show many “corded” traits, traces of the societies genetically related to the catchment area of the south-western Baltic. The SGC may be assigned an important role of a generator of neolithization (Fig. 2).

It is also from the “forest” zone of the drainages of the Dnieper, Nemen and Dvina that colonization movements originated around the same time and moved west covering the drainages of the Vistula and Oder. Primary examples of such movements are groups of the Comb-like and Stroked range (mainly NC) and, to a

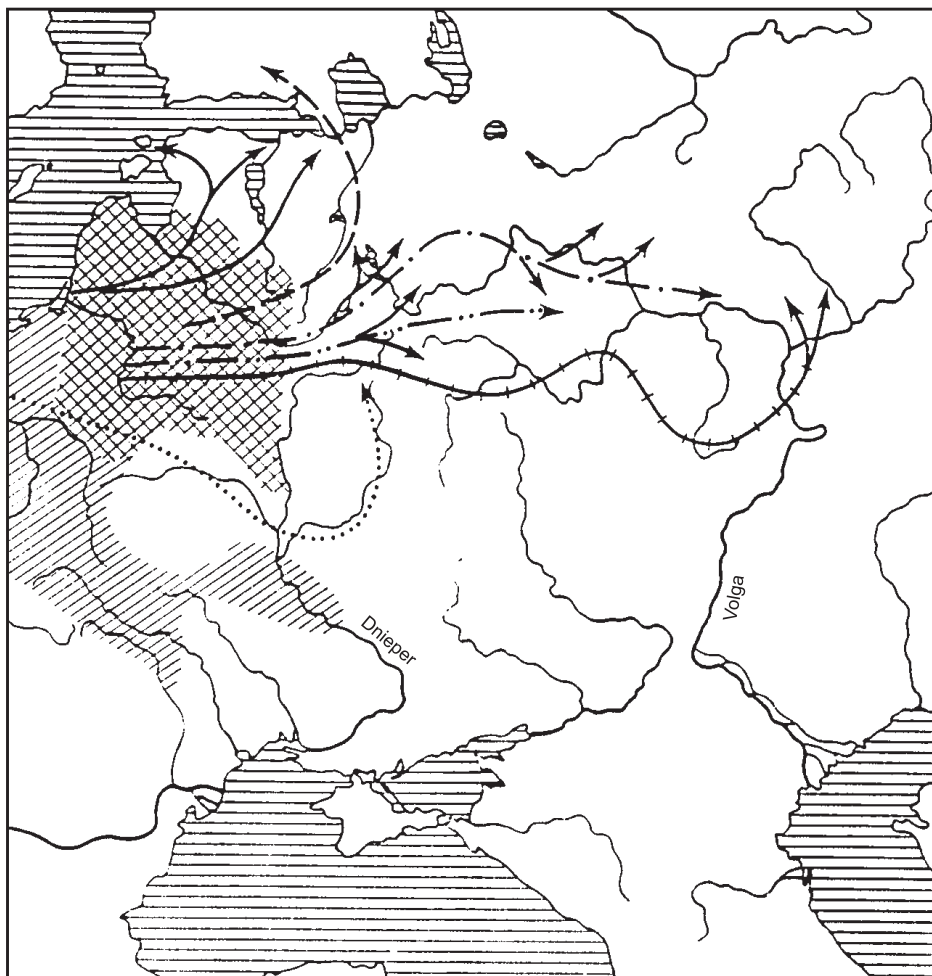


Fig. 2. East European movement directions (arrows) of the representatives of the Single Grave Culture (according to I.I. Artemenko).

lesser degree, the somewhat later influx of Comb Culture societies (Fig. 3). Their presence among Central European settlement environments bears far-reaching culture-making consequences. This applies mainly to the GAC but also to the CWC. Their impact would increase with the approach of the 2nd millennium BC. Features of migrants from the taiga have been recently recorded in compact complexes of Neolithic settlements (e.g. in the black-earth interior of the Kujawy Plateau: Dąbrowa Biskupia 21, prov. of Bydgoszcz, Opatowice 35, prov. of Włocławek: 2556 ± 78

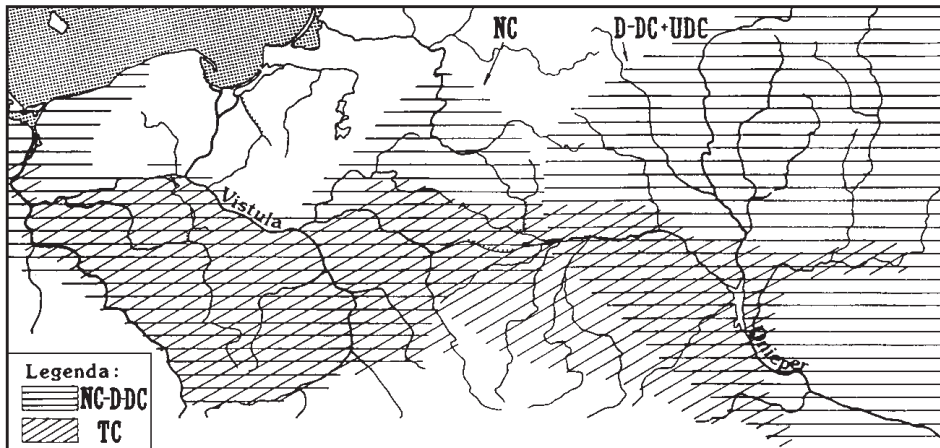


Fig. 3. Spatial relations of "Tiszciniec" (according to S.S. Berezanskaya) and the range of cultures with Comb-like and Stroked Pottery (NC = Nemen Culture; D-D+UDC = Dnieper-Donets and Upper Dnieper Cultures).

BC), which shows that at least in the field of economy the migrants had close contacts with agrarian populations (presence of bones of domestic animals: Korzecznik 6/7, prov. of Konin, Opatowice 35, prov. of Włocławek) [Olszewski 1987:66; Józwiak 1997].

Less clear is the "western" impact of the societies living in the borderland between the taiga and forest-steppe, primarily of the Yamnaya Culture (YC) which is identifiable in the forest-steppe zone as far as the line of the Dnieper-Ingulets or more occidental, "Yamnaya-Corded" ones [Shaposhnikova 1985:map 8; Niko-lova 1992]. From the Plain areas of the Vistula and Oder drainages, there come several source complexes revealing the latter of the mentioned cultural traditions (e.g. Kujawy sites: Bożejewice 8, prov. of Bydgoszcz, Krusza Zamkowa 3, prov. of Bydgoszcz) [Kośko, Kłochko 1991; Kośko 1992].

A conclusion may be drawn that in the 3rd millennium BC, in the drainages of the Dnieper and Vistula (partially in the Oder's, too), a system of intensive circulation of cultural patterns came into being which also facilitated the exchange of technical and utility experiences as well as *Weltanschauung* models. The origins of this phenomenon must have been related to the increase in the rate of neolithization, which was typical of large expanses of the European Plain at that time. In the 3rd millennium BC, neolithization reached a broad dimension. Agrarian patterns appeared in hunting and gathering zones of settlements [cf. Kobusiewicz, Kabaciński 1993], distant from the old enclaves of their development that had been formed already in the 6th millennium BC [Prinke, Szmyt 1990]. This multidirec-

tional penetration is a symptom of an increase in polylinearity of the economic and settlement development and a greater activity in the search for new habitats. A typical phenomenon of this period of the early agrarian era on the Plain is a settlement network consisting of small microregions made up of little camps/bivouacs and being a consequence of the prevalence of diversified structures of the animal raising and assimilating (hunting-gathering) economy.

It is only against this background — one may call it the “essence” of the climate of the decline of the early agrarian era — that one can also notice secondary factors of cultural integration in the territory under investigation. Among them are other reasons for some migratory movements like climatic ones (e.g. “pressure” exerted by the YC on the agrarian communities of the Balkan and Central European Eneolithic) [Cherednichenko 1980:44], exchange ones (e.g. emergence of interregional trails) or even proto-trade ones (e.g. far-reaching initiatives giving rise to a wider interest in the Volhynia copper or amber, see below).

A problem remains whether it is sensible to refer to the “borderland” cultural reality under discussion here as a “community”, specifically in the chronological dimension of the 3rd millennium BC when a space of intensive contacts came into being there. These contacts document a synthesis of genetically complex traditions. Ignoring obvious difficulties in identifying social consciousness with archaeological means (in this very case: awareness of separate origins, attitude to other people meaning “strangers” — as generators of “community feelings” of interest to us here), it has to be said that even with the use of diagnostic areas available to us, namely comparison of structures of pattern co-occurrence/circulation and their continuity, one cannot undertake any deeper conceptualization of the development mechanisms of the “borderland community”. This problem shall be dealt with below.

3. “TRZCINIEC” — AS A HYPOTHETICAL STABILIZATION STATE OF THE “BORDERLAND COMMUNITY” AFTER 1900 BC

“Trzcinić’s” borderland nature may be dealt with both from the perspective of a “continental (global) synthesis” and from that of a taxonomic analysis. Before we continue our discussion we should outline how the two perspectives correspond.

Among many attempts to place the assumed Trzcinić community in macro-space, the most spatially “expansive” suggestion has been made by S. Bereznanskaya [1972:190], who indicated that “the Trzcinić-Komarov community formed part of a great historical province which comprised such cultures as pre-Lusatian in the west, Abashevo in the east and probably cultures of eastern Baltic in the north.” Under this delimitation, “Trzcinić” is placed in the borderland between

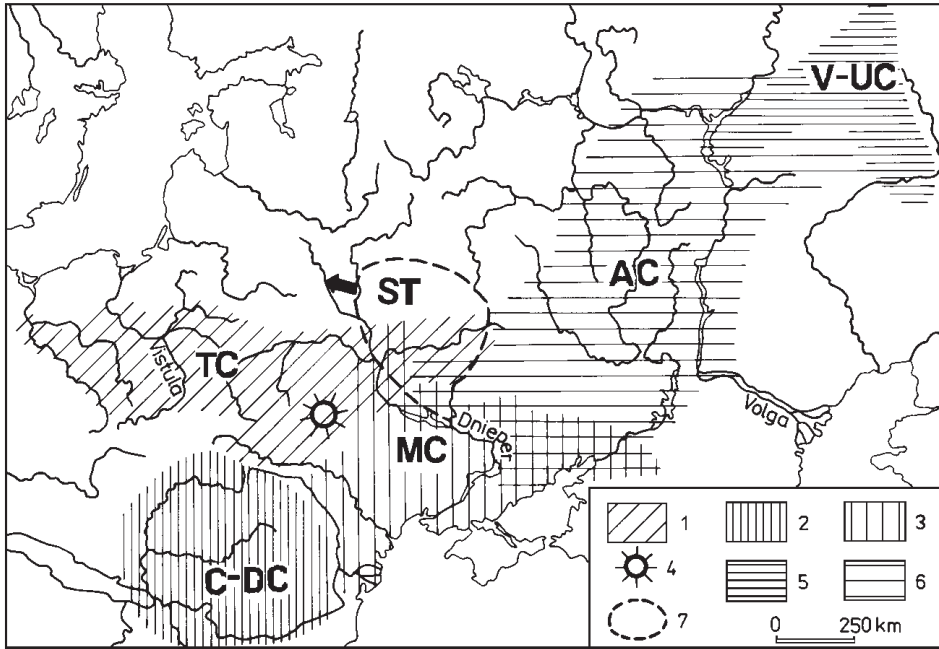


Fig. 4. Placement of "Trzciniec" (1) in the context of ranges and influence zones of the "Early Bronze Age Civilizations": Carpathian-Danube (2 - C-DC = center of Carpathian-Danube Civilization; 3 - MC = Mnogovalikovaya Culture) and Volga-Ural (5 - V-UC = center of Volga-Ural Civilization; 6 - AC = center of Abashevo Culture), 4 = center of Volhynia copper deposits; 7 ST = Sosnytsa type.

two large culture-making centers or "Early Bronze civilizations": Carpathian-Danube and Volga-Ural (Fig. 4:2, 5). Both centers came into being at the turn of the 3rd millennium BC practically contemporaneously. The issue of the degree of autonomy of their origins and development remains a problem. Next to hypotheses in favor of their full independence [cf. Bochkarev 1995:18] one can notice certain relationships which are difficult to classify solely as exchange symptoms, as an example of which may serve the hoard of Borodino [Gimbutas 1956]. Attention is drawn by alleged eastern borrowings in the sepulchral and military spheres (kurgans, a riding horse, a wagon) in the Carpathian-Danube center or hypothetically western ones in metallurgical designs (two-piece spiral fibulae, "Mycenaean patterns" in ornamentation) in the Volga-Ural center. The issue of the transfer of these patterns has not been sufficiently investigated yet while "Trzciniec" itself — which must be stressed — does not corroborate, in our opinion, so far ranging a picture of ties between these two civilizational centers of the Early Bronze Age in Europe.

Taking a more analytical (taxonomic) look at the problem, one has to observe that the two circles clearly differ in metallurgical production profiles both in respect of form and technology. This allows us to precisely delineate the areas of distribution of their artifacts with a relatively stable borderline — in the period when “Trzcinec” existed — on the Dnieper. In the early period, the Mnogovalikovaya Culture was the Carpathian-Danube outpost in the borderland, while the Abashevo and Early Srubnaya Cultures served as Volga-Ural outposts. In the later period this system was replaced by the following cultures (types): Noua-Sabatinovka and eastern “Trzcinec”, as representatives of the West, as well as Late Srubnaya and Sosnytsa proper, i.e. left-bank [cf. a different viewpoint in Artemenko 1987] as representatives of the East. It has to be mentioned that the above conclusions do not contradict the results of a comparative analysis of the pottery of the cultures involved (Fig. 4:3, 6, 7).

While assessing “Trzcinec’s” metallurgy, attention is being drawn to its embryonic character, “reproduction of foreign patterns” and a lack of “modifications by local artisans” [Dąbrowski 1972:96]. In the case of the western branch, the sources of the said “foreign patterns” are the Carpathian Tumulus and Pilyny Cultures [cf. Miśkiewicz 1978:195]. A similarly strong dependence on the metallurgical experience of the Carpathian-Danube center is manifested by the eastern branch [Berezanskaya 1972:189; 1985:443]. To be more specific, in the said territory one can encounter ornaments of Carpathian types (characteristic of the Komarov Culture) made, however, in “Trzcinec” environments. This is evidenced by a different technology used to make them. Other artifacts of this origin include weapons characteristic of the Noua-Sabatinovka Culture. There are, however, arguments in favor of their local origin [Klochko 1993:20-24; 1994:119]. Artifacts of the Kardashinka type, i.e. originating in the local, Middle-Dnieper metallurgical center [Klochko 1994:117-118] and artifacts of the Loboikivka type, related to the Srubnaya Culture and the Sosnytsa type [Klochko 1994:119], also belong to the same group of finds.

While assessing the genetic peculiarity of bronze artifacts, as outlined above, recorded in the territory of eastern “Trzcinec”, considerable importance should be attached to the verification of the hypothesis about the existence of large deposits of copper in Volhynia available for prehistoric exploitation [Małkowski 1931]. A confirmation of the hypothesis — as it has already been observed — should “change our view of the role of this area in the Bronze Age” [Dąbrowski 1972:87-88]. This task was undertaken by N.V. Ryndina [1980] who established by physicochemical methods that copper was exploited in Volhynia as early as in the CWC stage. Further research, carried out currently by an interdisciplinary team of Ukraine’s NAS, justifies the broadening of the chronological scale and the size of excavating and processing activities in Volhynia. As a result of the research large deposits of virgin copper were geologically identified and metallurgically studied. The deposits are closely stratigraphically related with the level of exploitation of the local first-class

flint whose deposits attracted Eneolithic settlements of the Tripolye Culture (Fig. 1:4). On a similar level deposits of amber were also found. Preliminary results of comparative analyses of early local forms of Tripolye copper artifacts with samples of Volhynia raw-material turned out to be positive. It is, therefore, highly probable that in the area along the right bank of the Middle Dnieper local deposits of copper were used for making bronze artifacts. This, in turn, could have given rise to the so-called Skvira metallurgical region within the boundaries of the Ukrainian Crystal Shield.

From the above discussion, three conclusions should be drawn: **(a)** looking at the system of circulation of cultural patterns from the perspective of the watershed of “Early Bronze Civilizations”, one cannot recognize “Trzciniec” as a borderland phenomenon; **(b)** its range is located at the north-eastern frontier of the influence of the Carpathian-Danube center; **(c)** however, it maintains certain autonomy that can be hypothetically related to the culturally creative role of the Volhynia deposits of copper and quite possibly amber.

a. The borderland character of “Trzciniec” depends on certain genetic issues of the “borderland community” discussed earlier (chiefly from the standpoint of the 3rd millennium BC). This specifically delineated area of circulation of cultural patterns kept its boundaries after 1900 BC, however, we do not know the rate and direction of its “Early Bronze Age transformation” or acculturation, which is related to the absence of radiocarbon dating of the beginnings of the eastern branch. In the development of “Trzciniec” one can find, to be sure, a number of significant references to the said community. They are particularly clear in the sphere of settlement and economy or, to put it broadly, in technical or utility aspects. These societies adopted certain standards of more stable forms of existence only during the migration outside the “northern den”, when they encountered the traditions of Early Bronze populations inhabiting Old Plateaus in the Circumcarpathian zone [Górski, Kadrow 1996:24]. It seems, too, that yet another heritage of the “borderland community” is the spreading of certain ideological and ritual standards in the “Trzciniec’s” range. Among them are cremation active traditions of the Sofievka-Middle-Dnieper cremation center can be observed here [Koško, Videiko 1995] or even kurgan building [for a similar point of departure of reception see Artemenko 1967].

Thus, it is a complex of patterns which formed — originally — on the Plain in the Vistula drainage and in the taiga in the western part of the Dnieper’s drainage. It is only from there that the complex expanded primarily to the west and south. The expansion to the south seems to have generated an entirely new cultural quality, namely “Trzciniec’s” loess groups and the Komarov Culture. This phenomenon has been recently systematically studied by J. Górski and S. Kadrow [1996]. The effects of these studies may serve as a reference point for a spatially wider interpretation.

b. The Early Bronze impulse that reached the “borderland community” was clearly of Carpathian-Danube origin. An analysis of distribution of bronze objects

does not justify enlargement of the community in the eastern direction, beyond the Dnieper, i.e. into the area where Volga-Ural bronze objects dominated. Consequently, any ties with the system of pattern circulation of the “left-bank” Sosnytsa type, of primary interest to us here, traditionally, albeit with certain hesitation, included in “Trzciniec” seem highly disputable. Early Bronze patterns reached the “borderland community” travelling along the Vistula, Dniester and Southern Bug. In the light of the most recent research (this applies to the cemetery in Gordiyevka), the trail along the Southern Bug River — treated as an amber trail from 1500 BC [Klochko 1996] — takes on particular importance. It connects the territories of interest to us here, through the Volhynia deposits, not only with the Balkans but also with Anatolia and with the eastern Mediterranean in general. The multiplicity of trails is borne out by the genetic structure of bronze objects in the area of east “Trzciniec”. For this reason, it can hardly be assumed that within its range there existed any uniform circulation system of patterns and artifacts of the Early Bronze Age Carpathian-Danube Civilization. “Trzciniec” was made up of different branches of this center whose development was relatively highly autonomous.

c. Is it true thus that after 1900 BC the “borderland community” reached a state of stabilization whose generating force must have been the tradition of the Early Bronze Age Carpathian-Danube Civilization? We believe that the essence of the changes taking place then is better described by the hypothesis assuming autonomy of development of vast expanses of the Central European Plain or the Eastern European taiga as far as the background is concerned. The Carpathian-Danube center hypothetically taking over the exploitation of Volhynia deposits of copper and quite possibly amber came into contact with the societies of the “borderland community”. This may have resulted in a selective adaptation by the latter of entirely different technical, utility and ideological patterns generated by elitist societies of the South. It seems that the Old Plateau exodus of “Trzciniec” was a response to this civilizational leaven.

Around 1300-1200 BC the “borderland community” gradually disappeared whereas the “Bug-Dniester borderline” progressively recovered its legibility.

CONCLUSIONS

To conclude let us go back to the question forming the title of this symposium: What was “Trzciniec”? Was it a stable cultural community, which is implied by the term “Trzciniec Culture” (following the widest taxonomic delineation)? Was it rather a marginal zone of Early Bronze Age acculturation within the circle of

the societies of the so-called borderland community, i.e. an entity of a relative compactness formed on the basis of active, multidirectional contacts of population groups of different genetic traditions?

It seems that this dilemma may be illustrated with an opposition known from historical and comparative linguistics, namely language family (group) and language league (or genetic kinship vs. typological kinship). A league is a form of a looser association of languages than a family, it is made up of languages of different origin “which as a result of their centuries-long and mutual contacts and influences have become very much alike” [Milewski 1965:153]. This type of acquired kinship occurs at many levels of language structure and does not have necessarily to lead to a deeper identification, i.e. changing into the state of linguistic, cultural and ethnic community. As an illustration can serve the history of one of the more telling examples of such language leagues, i.e. the Balkan League [Milewski 1965:135]. It was formed by such diverse languages as Greek [cf. Malmberg 1969], Albanian, Bulgarian or Romanian. Consequently, it bound together ethnic identities from the so-called Balkan Crucible where syntheses and disintegrations of cultural and political areas are particularly frequent.

It should be considered whether the deepening of the reception of that linguistic opposition creates an interesting explicatory perspective for prehistory. All the data presented in this paper lead to such a conclusion, i.e. to the recognition of the “borderland community” and consequently “Trzciniec” as a case of the development of a “cultural league” that came into being in a peculiar civilizational climate of the north-eastern frontier of the Balkan-Central European province.

Translated by Piotr T. Żebrowski

ABBREVIATIONS

AP	– Archeologia Polski, Warszawa
APL	– Archaeologia Polona, Warszawa
AR	– Arkheologia, Kiev
BPS	– Baltic-Pontic Studies, Poznań
ESA	– Eurasia Septentrionalis Antiqua, Helsinki
KSIA AN USSR	– Kratkiye Soobshcheniya Instituta Arkheologii AN USSR, Kiev
MANH	– Materiały Archeologiczne Nowej Huty, Kraków
MIA	– Materiały i Issledovaniya po Arkheologii SSSR, Moskva
PBF	– Praehistorische Bronzefunde, München
SA	– Sovetskaya Arkheologia, Moskva.
SPA	– Sprawozdania Archeologiczne, Kraków.

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