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THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIAL STRUCTURE: BELL BEAKERS AND TRZCINIEC COMPLEX IN NORTH-EASTERN PART OF CENTRAL EUROPE

The characteristics of social structures of Bell Beakers and Trzciniec Complex in north-eastern part of Central Europe is presented in the paper. The social life of these groupings was shaped by competition between particular descent-based groups as well as individuals and their families for prestige, status, power and wealth. The key factor setting social behaviour in order and integrating the group was kinship, which was related to the cultural system of spouse selection. The ranking of these communities can be described as moderate (Bell Beakers) and minimal (Trzciniec Complex). Although in the case of northern Beakers (Iwno Culture) it exhibited a tendency to growth, it never reached the level of stratification. The process of emancipation of the individual, which was very advanced in the case of Bell Beakers came to a halt among the communities of Trzciniec Complex. In the later „Trzciniec” structures the processes of depersonalisation of the grave furnishing, deindividualisation and increasing collectivism can be observed.

KEY WORDS: Bell Beakers, collectivisation, elite, individualisation, itinerant blacksmith, Iwno Culture, hoard, kinship group, potlach, power, ranking, stratification, Trzciniec Complex

INTRODUCTION

The adequate description and credible interpretation of past social structures is one of the most difficult and at the same time most intriguing problems of prehistoric studies. It is a question that gains particular importance with reference to the 3rd and the beginning of the 2nd millennium BC, which was a time when signs of substantial social transformations become evident in several parts of Europe. These were mainly initiated by Bell Beakers (BB; recently Nicolis [ed.] 2001) and later continued by different groupings of the Early Bronze Age (recently: Kristiansen 1998; Harding 2000). The intensity of these changes in particular areas

of temperate Europe varied and was proportional to the distance from the regional and supraregional cultural centres of the time (Shennan 1993; Sherratt 1993; Harding 2000, 414ff).

A main if not universal dilemma of social archaeology in all epochs is the question how to draw conclusions about social structure and changes that took place in it – sometimes over a long period – from material culture. The procedures that lead towards answers to these questions are diverse and sometimes very complex. They involve qualitative and quantitative analyses of archaeological sources, application of sociological and anthropological

theories, as well as methods and tools of converting the material text into one of social relations within a given human community (e.g. Vandkilde 1999, 245ff; Harding 2000, 387ff). Application of these procedures usually results in a model of the social structure, a certain ideal construct, which greatly differs from the real¹, complex and dynamic horizontal and vertical relations existing in prehistoric communities (Max Weber's „dimensions of society” – Mann 1986, 12).

„Societies are not unitary. They are not social systems (closed or open); they are not totalities” (Mann 1986, 3). Societies never find themselves in a state of equilibrium, but always in a wavering balance, or in sheer instability (Leach 1940; 1954; Dohnal 2001, 152). Their homogeneity and static character – as illustrated in models – creates a discord in comparison to the actual incoherence and changeability of these structures. And whereas anthropological models stand a little chance of getting close to the actuality of the reality they describe owing to selective and critical participatory observation (whatever one makes out of it), written sources and oral transmission, models of prehistoric archaeology, which lack such possibilities, operate in the area of cognition that is on the one hand delineated by material culture, and sociological and anthropological social theories on the other.

Unable to directly observe human actions, the archaeologist develops his opinion on the social order of a given past community in an indirect manner (Hodder 1982; Wason 1994, 6; Bernbeck, Müller 1996, Abb. 8). On the basis of source analysis, their configuration, mutual relations and contexts, he „reconstructs” the network of possible social interactions on which further reasoning will be based. It will be carried out through the filter of the mentioned sociological and anthropological theories and concern the essence of the bond that links particular members of the community, its numerous „natural” segments and ones that are „agreement-based”, as well as the community as

a structured whole. Undoubtedly, the image of societies proposed by particular scholars is a product of their knowledge and convictions, influence of research traditions and changing scientific paradigms. Although trivial, this statement is not often fully recognised in the prehistoriography of Central and Eastern Europe. The extensive archaeological literature that deals with the question of social structures most often utilises information provided by cemeteries and hoards, less frequently data afforded by settlements, and economic information. Ceremonial behaviour sources are of particular usefulness, as these were rituals and symbols contained in them that formed a kind of a „language” to communicate the social status, prestige, affluence, authority, rights and duties due both to the community and to the individual (Leach 1954, 279; Garwood 1991). The character of the sources and the complexity of the problem together resulted in the focusing of study on certain aspects of social life, e.g. on the questions of the degree of complexity and on the forms of social structures, less frequently the social structure as a multidimensional entire. These are aspects such as egalitarianism, ranking, stratification, forms of power, the elites, early state organisations, or prestige (cf. Peebles, Kus 1977; Renfrew, Shennan [eds] 1982; Braithwaite 1984; Mainfort, Jr. 1985; Shennan 1986a; 1986b; Spelmann 1986; Brumfiel, Earle [eds] 1987; Ostojka-Zagórski 1989; Larick 1991; Cobb 1993; Wason 1994; Arnold 1996 [ed.]; Müller, Bernbeck [eds] 1996; Vandkilde 1996; 1999; Earle 1997; Kristiansen 1998; Eliten... 1999; Harding 2000; Kadrow 2001). In recent years, despite pessimism of certain researchers concerning the cognitive boundaries of such procedures, the ennoblement of the material culture as a specific form of text about the past, was accompanied with a growth of importance of movable sources as the foundation for sociological reconstruction (Hodder 1988; Tilley 1991).

The objective of this article is an attempt to present and interpret the social structure of two cultural communities, which occupied lands situated to the East of the Oder basin and the West of the Bug basin: Bell Beakers (BB) and the Trzciniec Complex (TC). This area is the most north-eastern part of the BB ecumene, whereas for the TC it is its western part (Fig. 1). Two BB agglomerations in

¹ Cf. distinction: the pattern of ideal society (ideal – postulated notions of members of a society on how it should function) and actual social relations („empirical norms”) – Dohnal 2001, 156.

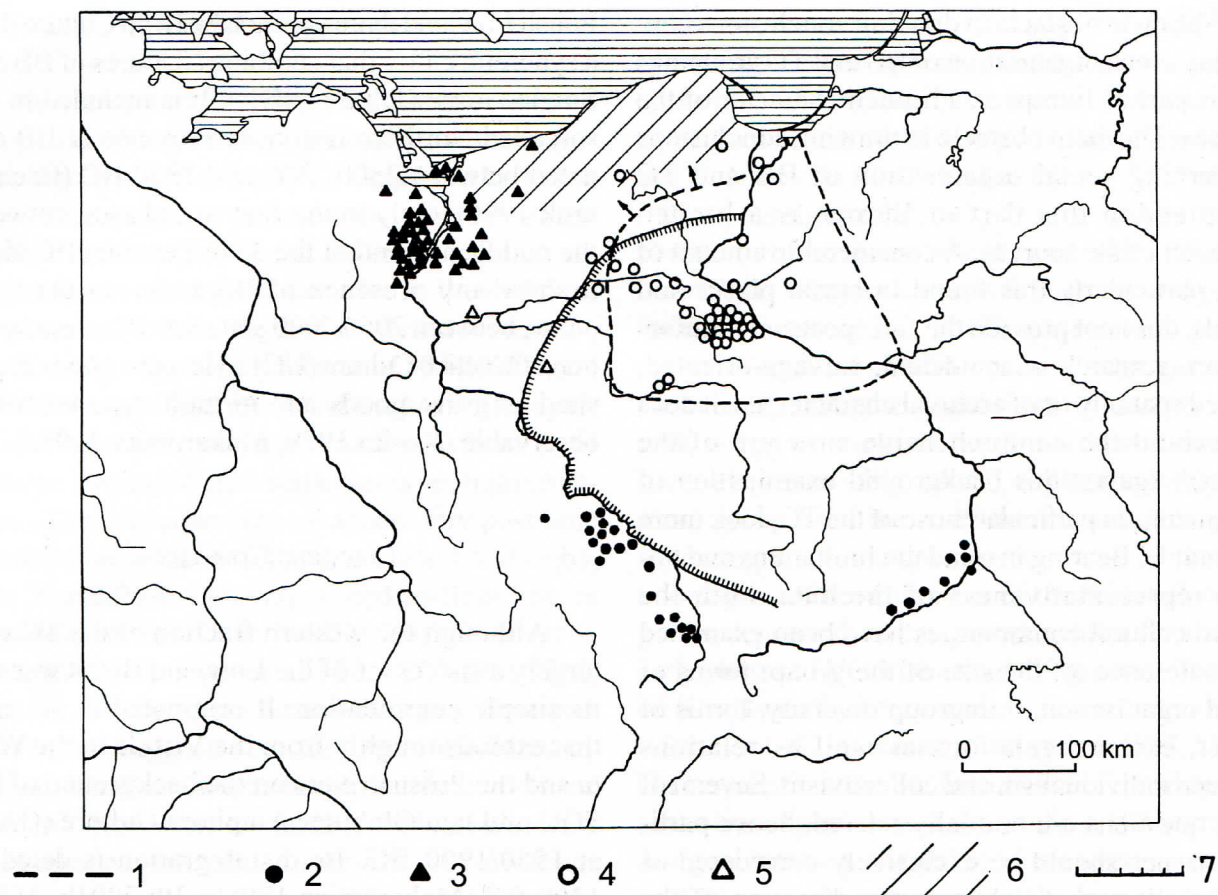


Fig. 1. Distribution of the Bell Beakers and Trzciniec Complex in North-Eastern Central Europe.

1 – Spatial range of the Iwno Culture (northern Beakers); 2 – Bell Beaker sites in southern Poland; 3 – ‘pure’ Bell Beakers or Beaker traits mainly in the *Oderschnurkeramik* context; 4 – Bell Beaker traits in the Iwno Culture; 5 – Bell Beaker traits without defined context; 6 – unmapped area (numerous traits of the Bell Beaker tradition, mainly flint daggers); 7 – western frontier of the Trzciniec Complex. Source: Czebreszuk, Szymt 2001, with amendments; Makarowicz 1998b, 2003.

the region have been analysed: the North Polish (of the so-called Iwno Culture – a local variety of BB), which encompasses part of the lowlands between the Oder and the Vistula (Koško 1979; 1991a; 1991b; Makarowicz, Czebreszuk 1995; Czebreszuk 1996; 1998b; 2001; Makarowicz 1998a; 2003), and the South Polish, with three major concentrations: in the Upper and Lower Silesia and the Little Po-

land (Kamieńska, Kulczycka-Leciejewiczowa 1970; Wojciechowski 1972; 1987; Machnik 1979; 1987; Budziszewski, Haduch, Włodarczyk 2003), as well as the lowland and upland enclave of TC in the basin of the rivers (Gardawski 1959; Koško 1979; Rydzewski 1986; Taras 1995; Czebreszuk 1996; 1998a; Górski, Kadrow 1996; Górski 1998a; 1998b; Makarowicz 1998a; 1998b).

SOCIAL ORGANISATION

It is very rare that we should have a wide range of data at our disposal, based on which we could construct an optimal model of the social system of a given community. On the contrary lack of such information is a barometer that points to the permanent dis-

comfort of the archaeologist that deal with the problem in question. In the present work selected data was used from choice settlements, cemeteries as well as single graves and hoards; on each occasion its cognitive value for the analysed problems has been given.

The main obstacle in drawing conclusions concerning social organisation of BB and TC groupings in this part of Europe is a limited character of the sources. The main obstacle in drawing conclusions concerning social organisation of BB and TC groupings in this part of Europe is a limited character of the sources. A considerable amount of data, particularly this found in burial places and hoards, does not provide the full spectrum of information (research is accidental, salvage-oriented, limited spatially or of archival character, i.e. it does not exhibit the comprehensive structure of the object). Against this background examination of settlements, in particular those of the TC, look more favourable. Bearing in mind the limitations and uneven representativeness of the data, both the named cultural communities have been examined with reference to: the size of the group, forms of social organisation, intragroup diversity, forms of power, external relations as well as relations between individualism and collectivism. Several of these questions are mutually related, hence particular issues should be exclusively considered as division lines that delineate the direction of the narrative. The problem of ideology has not been considered separately; it appears in different places during discussion of particular questions.

NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN BELL BEAKERS

The two main BB enclaves referred to in the introduction: the southern and the northern are fundamentally different in several aspects. In the first instance BB settlement is documented in sepulchral objects: cemeteries and single graves, and chance discoveries. In the second case these also include settlements and hoards (Makarowicz, Czebreszuk 1995). However, it is only with reference to the southern Polish agglomerations (of the Silesian and Little Poland regions) that one can talk about „genuine” BB, genetically related to their Czech and Moravian group or, in general, the Danube enclave (Machnik 1987, 141ff; Wojciechowski 1987, 691; Kadrow 2001, 208), dated to 2500-2150 BC (Budziszewski, Haduch, Włodarczak 2003). In the

Polish Lowland there appears the Iwno Culture (IC), a syncretic entity that combines features of BB and Single Grave Culture (SGC). It is included in the so-called Northern European Province of BB and dated between 2500/2400 and 1800 BC (Czebreszuk 1996). Only in the first two phases, between the middle and end of the 3rd millennium BC, does it show any presence of BB traits. In the third phase, between 2050/2000 and 1800 BC, the adaptation of Únětice Culture (UC) style metal goods deposited as grave-goods and in multi-type hoards is observable (Koško 1979; Makarowicz 1998a).

TRZCINIEC COMPLEX

Although the western fraction of the TC was largely a successor of the Lowland BB, it was not its simple continuation. It originated in the area that extends roughly from the Vistula to the Warta and the Prosna rivers on the background of IC, SGC and late Globular Amphora Culture (GAC) at 1950/1900 BC. Its disintegration is dated to 1300 BC (Makarowicz 1998b, 30; 2001b, 352ff; Czebreszuk 2001, Fig. 9), i.e. it took place as early as the beginnings of the Lusatian Culture (LC). At 1850/1800 BC, intense interaction with the Eastern branch of TC (which exhibited characteristics of the „Sub-Neolithic” formation – a late form of the Neman Culture) takes place, and at 1700/1600 BC, with the southern enclave of the complex, which brings inspiration of the Otomani/Füzesabony Culture (OC/FC) onto the Lowland (Makarowicz 1998a, 286ff). In southern Poland the TC communities are considered migrants from the north-east (Kempisty 1978, 413; Górski, Kadrow 1996, 9). Its beginnings are dated to the period ca. 1850-1800 BC and endings to 1100 BC (Górski, Kadrow 1996, 13; Górski 1998a, 11). Settlement of the said population in this area, particularly in the Western Little Poland region, is of a more stable character than this on the Lowland, and a number of assemblages displays characteristics of „southern” units: OC/FC, Mad'arovce Culture (MC), Piliny Culture and Tumulus Culture (TuC; Kempisty 1978; Górski 1998a, 13ff; 1998b).

Size of the groups

Assessment of the size of the discussed human groups, i.e. communities operating individually (independently) on the Polish Lowland can be based on settlement and grave sources, whereas in the South Polish enclave it can be based exclusively on grave sources. In all cases, due to the deficient character of the data, these are only estimates.

IC settlements occupy an area of 800-2000 sq. m, which has been determined on the basis of dispersion of movable materials and distribution of features. Typical of such settlements are light structures of shelter character, of which only post hole remained (seasonal?; Siniarzewo, site 1 and Dęby, sites 29 and 29A, Cuiavia) or sunken-floor houses (Smarglin, site 22, Cuiavia – Fig. 2A) (Czebreszuk 1996, 220ff; Makarowicz 1998a, 215-223; 2000, 76ff). The size of these homesteads (e.g. Smarglin – 20 sq. m) suggests that they were inhabited by nuclear families. Single-house hamlets were the standard. However, no undisputable settlements made up of a more substantial number of dwellings have been discovered (a possible such settlement is Dęby, site 29 and 29A – Czebreszuk 1996, 131).

The size and shape of settlements, the size of the houses and distribution of movable sources and features bring one to the conclusion that they were inhabited by small groups of people: 1 or at most 2-3 nuclear families, i.e. groups made up of 4-5 to the maximum of 15 persons (at winter season?). It cannot be ruled out that such a community consisted of two or three generations of an extended family. Most likely, the settlements operated for a short period: they were single- or several-season structures. Only in a few cases can one talk about long-term – multi-phase occupation of a settlement by northern Beakers (e.g. Siniarzewo, site 1, Cuiavia). Economic and settlement-related geographical data present IC communities as sparse and relatively mobile (Makarowicz 1998a, 274ff).

Settlements are frequently accompanied by cemeteries where a number of graves (family graves?; e.g. Iwno, Cuiavia – Brunner 1905) are usually found. Only to some of them can one attribute long-term use by more than one generation or use by more than one group (Siniarzewo, site 1, Cuiavia; Śmiardowo Krajeńskie, site 6 and Skrzatusz, both

in Krajna, North Poland – Schäfer 1987). Scarcity of relatively contemporary graves at „Iwno” cemeteries (e.g. Dobrze, site 6, Cuiavia – Fig. 3A) confirms the low demographic potential of the societies (Jażdżewski 1937; Koško 1979, 166ff; Makarowicz, Czebreszuk 1995, 113ff). Larger burial places – Siniarzewo, site 1, and Skrzatusz and Śmiardowo Krajeńskie, site 6, both located out of the central ecumene of IC (Krajna region) – are the effect of grave cumulation over a longer time. Particularly instructive, although difficult to interpret, is the example of the Śmiardowo cemetery (over 80 graves – Fig. 4A-C), where (probably) the same group used the structure for over 200 years following an immutable burial ritual. In the first two phases of development of the burial place the goods deposited in the graves exhibit features of early phases of UC, in the third (19 graves) – features of IC („Iwno” pottery and „Únětice” metalwork – Schäfer 1987; Bokinić, Czebreszuk 1993, 130ff). On assumption that the final phase of development of the burial place lasted shorter than 100 years (i.e. 3-4 generations), we arrive at the average of 6.33 or 4.75 grave per generation. No preserved skeletons were found in Śmiardowo, thus the death-rate structure, let alone living population structure, cannot be recreated. Since the IC burial ritual is in the great majority of cases individualised, one can assume equality between the number of graves and the number of people buried in them. Based on different examples (Jerszyńska 1991), the size of the group which used the necropolis can be estimated as being at most a very few dozen (30-40) persons. However, it appears that the typical IC community was much smaller and consisted of a maximum of 10-15 persons, i.e. 2-3 nuclear families or two, three-generation extended family (contra – Dąbrowski 1997, 146).

Less valuable information pertains to BB of southern Poland. These communities are known from ca. 30 sites (cemeteries, single graves and chance discoveries) which make up 3 centres: two in the Lower and Upper Silesia and one in Little Poland (Fig. 1). Due to lack of examined settlements in the region, the estimated size of the „Beaker” groups can only be roughly assessed from the size of the cemeteries, whose number of graves ranges from a few (e.g. Złota, site „Niwa Dwor-

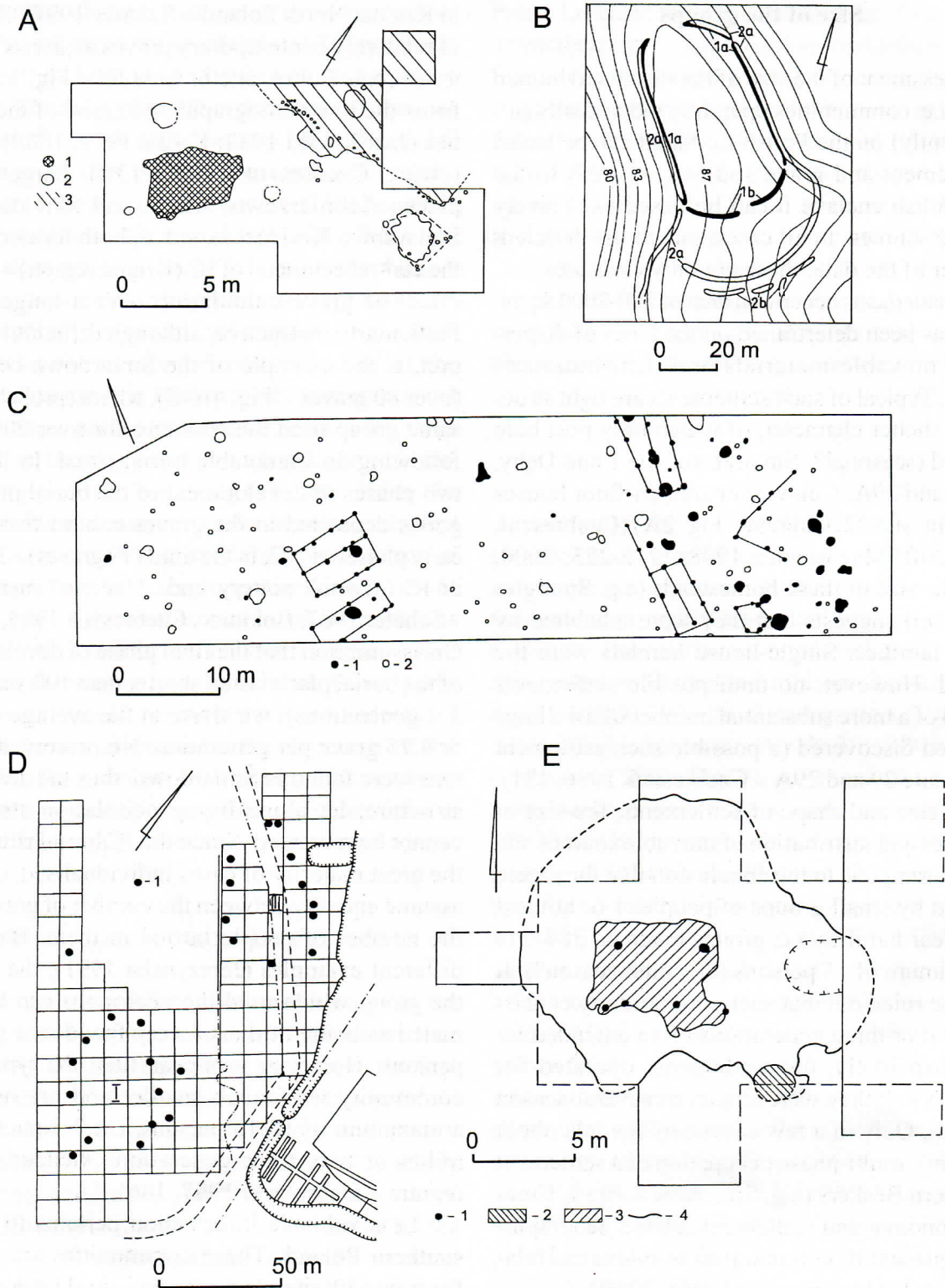


Fig. 2. Examples of Bell Beaker and Trzciniec Complex settlement pattern.

A. Bell Beakers dwelling structure from Smarglin, site 22, Cuiavia: 1 – Bell Beakers house; 2, 3 – Neolithic features. Source: Czebreszuk 1996. B. Plan of Iwno Culture enclosure in Biskupin, site 2a: 1a, 1b – ditch I; 2a, 2b – ditch II. Source: Grossmann 1998. C. Plan of Trzciniec Complex settlement in Babia, site 6, Great Poland: 1 – Trzciniec Complex features; 2 – other features. Excavation: P. Makarowicz. D. Plan of Trzciniec Complex settlement in Nowa Huta-Mogiła, site 55, Little Poland: 1 – distribution of features (traces of dwelling structures) in building phases I and III. Source: Górski 1994. E. Trzciniec Complex settlement in Goszczewo, site 14, Cuiavia: 1 – postholes; 2 – pit; 3 – layout of dwelling structure; 4 – extent of culture layer. Source: Czebreszuk 1987.

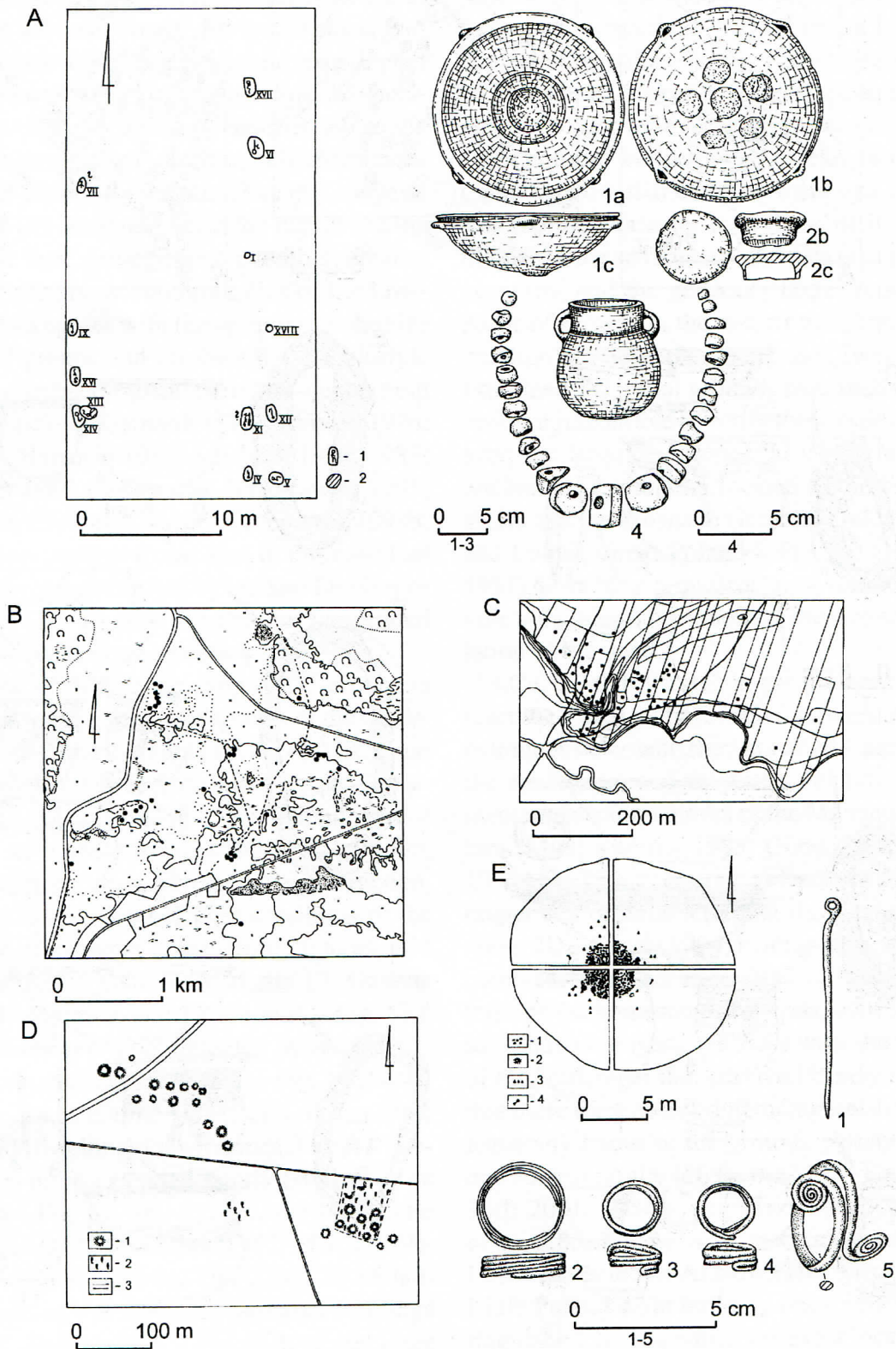


Fig. 3. Examples of Bell Beakers and Trzciniec Complex funerary rituals.

A. Plan of cemetery in Dobrze, site 6, Cuiavia: 1 – Bell Beakers graves (right: 1a-4 – grave goods from grave I; 1-3 – clay; 4 – amber); 2 – other graves. Source: Jązdzewski 1937, with amendments. B. Distribution of Trzciniec Complex (mainly) barrows in Tyszowce microregion, South-East Poland. Source: Kuśnierz 1990. C. Distribution of Trzciniec Complex barrows in Guciów microregion, South-East Poland. Source: Rogozińska 1961. D. Distribution of Trzciniec Complex barrows in Łubna cemetery, Great Poland. E. Schematic plan of barrow 9 and grave goods from Trzciniec Complex cemetery in Łubna. 1, 2 – bronze; 3-5 gold. Source: Gardawski 1951.

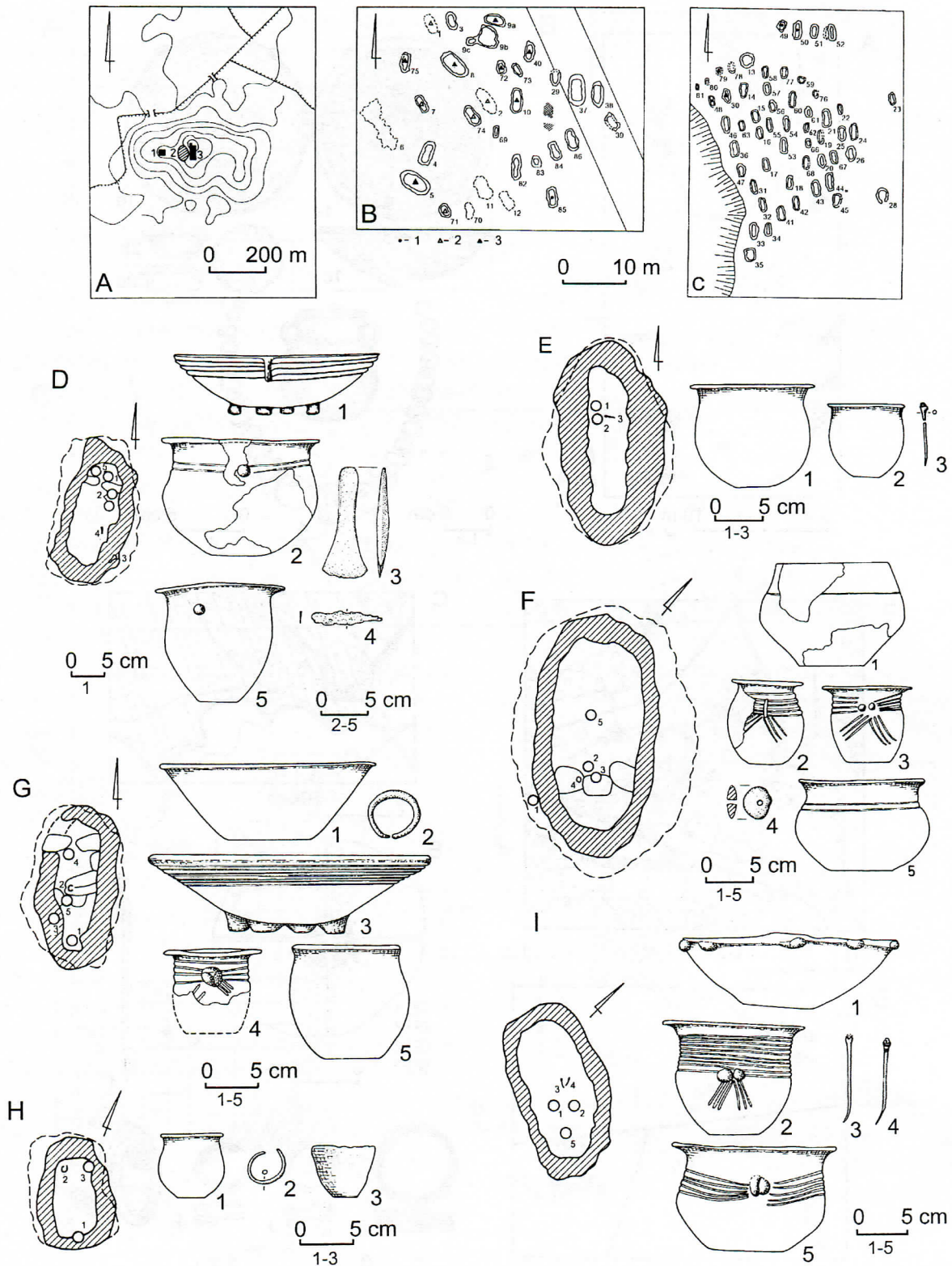


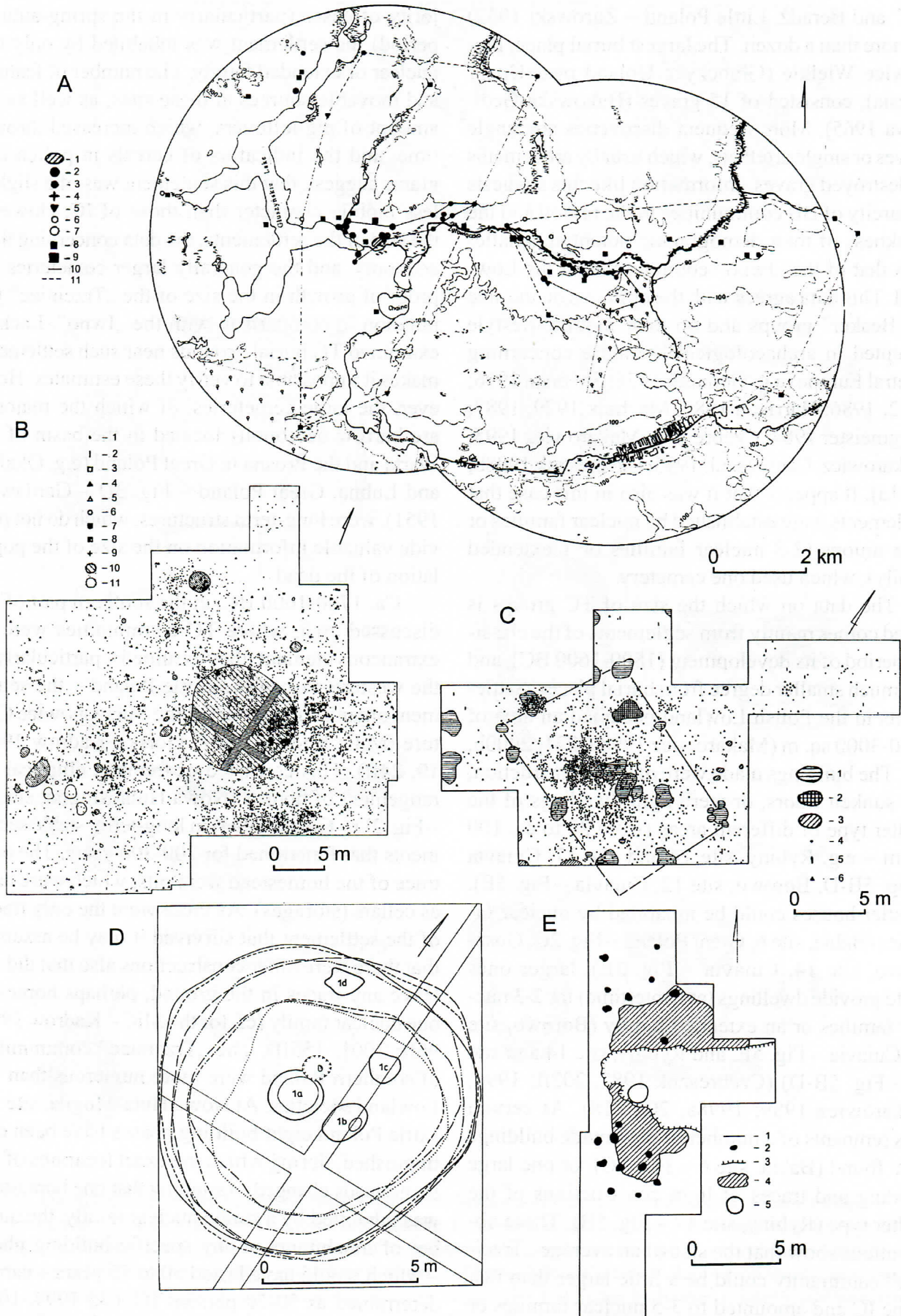
Fig. 4. Example of Iwno Culture funerary ritual from Śmiardowo Krajeńskie, site 6, Krajna, North Poland. A. General plan of the cemetery: 1 – western burial ground; 2 – eastern burial ground; 3 – destroyed area. B (western) and C (eastern) burial grounds: 1 – rich furnished grave of Early Únětice Culture; 2 – poor furnished grave of Iwno Culture; 3 – rich furnished grave of Iwno Culture; other – poor furnished grave of Early Únětice Culture. D. Layout and the inventory of grave 40: 1, 2, 5 – clay; 3, 4 – bronze. E. Layout and the inventory of grave 33: 1, 2 – clay; 3 – bronze. F. Layout and the inventory of grave 8: 1, 3-5 – clay; 2 – bronze. G. Layout and inventory of grave 75: 1-3, 5 – clay; 4 – amber. H. Layout and the inventory of grave 72: 1, 3 – clay; 2 – bronze. I. Layout and the inventory of grave 9A: 1, 2, 5 – clay; 3, 4 – bronze. Source: Schäfer 1987.

ska” and Beradz, Little Poland – Żurowski 1932) to more than a dozen. The largest burial place, Pietrowice Wielkie (Głubczyce Upland near Upper Silesia), consisted of 15 graves (Bukowska-Gedigowa 1965). More frequent discoveries are single graves or single artefacts, which usually are remains of destroyed graves. Information like this suggests a scarcity of BB communities in the region and the weakness of their demographic potential, smaller than that of the „Iwno” communities of the Lowland. This data agrees with the opinions on the size of „Beaker” groups and on their mobile lifestyle accepted in archaeological literature concerning Central Europe (e.g. Gerhardt 1976; Shennan 1976; 1982; 1986; Harrison 1980; Machnik 1979; 1987; Sangmeister 1984; Czebreszuk, Makarowicz 1995; Makarowicz, Czebreszuk 1995; Czebreszuk 1998b; 2001a). It appears that it was also in this case that settlements were established by nuclear families or their unions (2-3 nuclear families or 1 extended family), which used one cemetery.

The data on which the size of TC groups is based comes mainly from settlements of the classical period of its development (1800-1600 BC), and to a much smaller degree from burial places. Settlements in the Polish Lowland occupied an area of 1500-3000 sq. m (Makarowicz 1998a, 221; 2000b, 79). The buildings made were of post construction, had sunken floors, or were light dwellings of the shelter type of different areas (from 20 to ca. 100 sq. m – e.g. Rybiny, site 14 and site 17, Cuiavia – Fig. 5B-D, Borowo, site 12, Cuiavia – Fig. 5E). Smaller houses could be inhabited by nuclear families (Babia, site 6, Great Poland – Fig. 2C; Goszczewo, site 14, Cuiavia – Fig. 2E), larger ones could provide dwellings (at wintertime) for 2-3 nuclear families or an extended family (Borowo, site 12, Cuiavia – Fig. 5E, and Rybiny, site 14 and site 17 – Fig. 5B-D) (Czebreszuk 1987, 202ff; 1996; Makarowicz 1989; 1998a, 204-218). At certain sites remnants of a number of post-made buildings were found (Babia, site 6 – Fig. 2C), or one large building and traces of light constructions of the shelter type (Rybiny, site 17 – Fig. 5B). These observations show that the size of an average „Trzciniac” community could be a little larger than that of the IC and amounted to 3-5 nuclear families or 2-3 extended families (12-25 persons). In the ma-

jority of cases (particularly in the spring-autumn period) the settlement was inhabited by only one nuclear or extended family. The number of features and movable sources at these sites, as well as the amount of pig leftovers, which increased through time, and the indicators of cereals in pollen diagrams suggest, that this settlement was of a slightly less mobile character than those of IC. However the size of the settlements, the data concerning their economy, and the generally larger cemeteries are proof of growth in the size of the „Trzciniac” population in comparison with the „Iwno”. Lack of examined TC burial grounds near such settlements makes it impossible to verify these estimates. However, the large cemeteries, of which the majority are barrow necropolis located in the basin of the Warta and the Prosna in Great Poland (e.g. Okalew and Łubna, Great Poland – Fig. 3D – Gardawski 1951), were long-term structures, which do not provide valuable information on the size of the population of the dead.

Ca. 1700-1600 BC, in the southern part of the discussed area, where TC communities were an extraneous element, they assumed – particularly in the western part of the Little Poland – the settlement organisation model of the Mierzanowice Culture (MiC; Kadrow 1995; Górski, Kadrow 1996, 19, 24ff). This consisted of frequent elliptical arrangement of houses (Nowa Huta-Mogila, site 55 – Fig. 2D – Górski 1994) in long-term, stable settlements that functioned for 200-300 years. The only trace of the homestead were pits, which were used as cellars (storages). As these were the only traces of the settlement that survived it may be assumed that there were other constructions also that did not leave any traces in the ground, perhaps homes to one nuclear family (cf. for the MiC – Kadrow 1995, 96ff; 2001, 155ff). The „Trzciniac” communities of southern Poland were more numerous than the Lowland societies. At Nowa Huta-Mogila, site 55, Little Poland eight building phases have been distinguished, during which the exact locations of the homesteads changed. Assuming that one homestead was inhabited by a single nuclear family, the number of inhabitants in any specific building phase – which would have lasted 50 to 55 years – can be determined as 50-70 persons (Górski 1994, 102). Data that confirms a considerable size of settle-



ments is also provided by other sites in this region (Rydzewski 1986), e.g. Jakuszowice, site 2 (Górski 1991) and Złota Pińczowska, (Kempisty 1987), where traces of intense, long-term activity have been documented. Such estimates are confirmed by large and long-lived cemeteries like Żerniki Górne, Little Poland, where mass graves occur (Kempisty 1978).

On the other hand, settlements of the Mazovia and Podlasie regions, East Poland, in which buildings with an area of 20-30 m² have been found, relate to the scattered model of lowland settlement, with its small communities (Taras 1995). Thus one may cautiously assume that the size of the TC groups in the region was similar. The barrow cemeteries which have been examined here (Tyszowce microregion – Fig. 3B – Kuśnierz 1990; Taras 1995 or Guciów, South-East Poland – Fig. 3C – Rogozińska 1961), and which may have up to several dozen barrows of different age, do not provide useful data for paleodemographic analysis.

Forms of social organisation

Using the available data it is difficult to determine indisputably the principles governing aggregation of human groups in BB and TC communities. In the case of the lowland enclave of TC, the number of settlements, their size, the presence of stable constructions, and economy-based data (palynological indicators of animal breeding and farming, an increased number of pig bones) all suggest a less mobile lifestyle than that of the „Iwno” communities (Makarowicz 1998a, 290).

One has to assume that the key aggregation criterion in both the cases discussed, were blood ties, and that the nuclear family and/or the multi-generation extended family were the basic social units. Unions of several (related) families inhabiting 2-3 settlements created a lineage. The greater settlement stabilisation in the case of TC resulted in a growing importance of territorial bonds as the aggregation principle of these traditionally descent-based structures. In effect, localised kinship-based groups (lineages?) which exploited a given microregion, were established. The Rybiny and Sarnowo microregions (Fig. 5A) show a picture of two communities together forming a group made up of a maximum of 6-8 nuclear families, i.e. 24-40 persons (Makarowicz 1998a, 256ff; Makarowicz, Milecka 1999, 57). From the fact that each community had a different cemetery, one can assume that they were relatively independent in ritual matters (the feeling of separate origin?). However the closeness of the dwelling places and overlapping of areas of economic activity, let one see in here the origin of some type of territorial bond. A hypothesis, according to which the population of both settlements formed descent-based communities (separate lineages or rather their parts) the stability of which was secured by the principle of exogamy, appears credible.

Reconstruction of the size and structure of groups larger than those inhabiting single settlements or a microregion (supraregional) is a much more difficult task. Among other things it requires good excavational examination of the remains of several settlements and cemeteries that may be scattered over a vast area. This, in turn, creates a requirement for precise definition of the boundaries of those

Fig. 5. Examples of Trzciniiec Complex settlement.

A. Organization of Trzciniiec Complex settlement and economic area in Rybiny microregion (western equidistant) and Sarnowo microregion (eastern equidistant), Cuiavia: 1 – central settlement in Rybiny, site 17; „stage” site; 3 – penetration trace; 4 – cemetery; 5 – „flint” Early Bronze Age penetration trace; 6 – Early Bronze Age penetration trace; 7 – Early Bronze Age „stage” site; 8 – Early Bronze Age or Trzciniiec Complex penetration trace; 9 – Early Bronze Age or Trzciniiec Complex „stage” site; 10 – intensive exploitation zone; 11 – penetration zone. Source: Makarowicz 1998a. B. Trzciniiec Complex settlement in Rybiny, site 17, Cuiavia: 1 – pottery fragment; 2 – flint; 3 – stone; 4 – daub; 5 – shell fragment; 6 – whorl of spindle; 7 – hatchet; 8 – axe; 9 – animal bones; 10 – Trzciniiec Complex features; 11 – features of indeterminate culture. Source: Makarowicz 2000b. C. Trzciniiec Complex dwelling structure in Rybiny, site 14, Cuiavia: 1 – Trzciniiec Complex feature; 2 – hearth; 3 – Neolithic feature; 4 – pottery fragment; 5 – flint artefact; 6 – stone artefact. Source: Makarowicz 1989. D. Layout of Trzciniiec Complex dwelling structure from Rybiny, site 17, Cuiavia. 1a – „central feature”; 1b-1d – hearts. E. Trzciniiec Complex dwelling structure with sunken floor from Borowo, site 12, Cuiavia: 1 – postholes; 2 – remains of structure’s lower levels; 3 – pit (“cellar”); 4 – contemporary dug-out. Source: Makarowicz 1998a.

cultural phenomena that reflect convergences on the supraregional scale. Frequently particular cultural groupings would cross the boundaries of ecological regions or of geographic-historic regionalisation, which constitute comfortable levels of reference for this kind of research (Czerniak, Piontek 1988, 136ff). It is also for these very reasons that the sense and cognitive capacity of territorial social structure analysis on levels higher than a local group are sometimes questioned (Ostoja-Zagórski 1989, 198; Kadrow 1995, 105ff; 2001, 158).

Unstratified units of higher order social organisation are frequently referred to as tribal structures (Sahlins 1968; Service 1971, 100; Kristiansen 1998, 44ff). However, owing to the ambiguity and imprecise definition of the term and its frequent ideological partiality, its analytical and epistemological value remains limited (see: Braun, Plog 1982, 504ff; Saitta 1983, 820ff; Arnold 1996, 1ff; O'Shea, Barker 1996, 13; Dohnal 2001; Kadrow 2001, 158ff). On the other hand, the notion of the tribe has found a permanent place in anthropological and archaeological literature, e.g. as a traditional name for „primitive” societies. In most cases it is used to refer to a higher order unit of social organisation (supraregional, not exclusively based on kinship), „(...) but based on an ethnic group or part of one and characterised by sharing territory, a political structure and also an ethnonym” (Szykiewicz 1987b, 272ff). Tribalism, however, is neither a universal nor a necessary stage of development of ancient social structures (Sherratt 1984, 123; Kadrow 1995, 107ff).

Specialist literature gives attention to societies of chieftain type, in which higher institutionalised forms of ranking, i.e. social stratification, appear (e.g. Gilman 1981; Shennan 1993; Wason 1994, 38ff; Vandkilde 1996; Earle 1997; Kristiansen 1998, 45ff; Harding 2000, 410ff). From the archaeological point of view UC, MaC and OC/FC are stratified among structures with a high degree of hierarchisation. And although in E. R. Service's (1971, 100) classification they would represent the non-tribal structure, other approaches, draw attention to the fact that sometimes tribal organisations can arrive at the level of chieftain centralisation (Vorbrich 1987, 369). Such organisms as chiefdoms are frequently considered as intermediary units

between a tribal and a state society (more: O'Shea, Barker 1996; Earle 1997; Kristiansen 1998, 44; Harding 2000, 393).

Faced with such dilemmas it is difficult to define unequivocally the relationship of BB and TC with any particular unit of social (socio-political) organisation at the level of the entire system. The formation of a uniform material culture over vast territories (in case of the TC between the Odra or Warta and the Dnieper), which is evidence of things like a feeling of autonomy in relation to other communities, can be an indication of certain forms of higher order social organisation. Emphasis on group identity is particularly evident in vessel stylistics, whose propagation could be predominantly related to the network of exchange of women (regional and supraregional) and, through this, the establishment of increasingly extensive alliances. Based on that, it is difficult, however, to identify the discussed communities with particular type of social organisation (e.g. tribal, *Big Man* structure, or chiefdom). The main organizing principle of these units were blood ties – biological or mythical kinship (see: Shennan 1993, 142) – rather than territorial unity. One can assume that they had a clan structure. In those clans, which in most cases were exogamous and with BB and TC probably also matrilineal, the fundamental role was played by the conviction of descent from a common ancestor-progenitor (Penkala-Gawęcka 1987, 150ff). Genealogies transmitted from one generation to another were also important.

In the case of „Trzciniac” settlements inhabited by a number of families we can assume that they constituted a localised, corporate kinship-based group, whose establishment was a result of dwelling in one place for substantial time (Makarowicz 1998a, 257ff). Relative stability made territorialism side by side with kinship slowly gain importance as one of the principles underlying the group. However, its dominance and assumption of the role of the principal criterion for aggregation of individuals and families in the Lowland occurred only in the period of the LC, i.e. in the later part of the Bronze Age (second part of 2nd millennium BC).

Having such fragmented data at one's disposal, it is immensely difficult to find an archaeological equivalent to social units of a higher degree of

aggregation. The unification of the material culture of BB and TC and the long-term use of certain cemeteries let one assume the existence of long-lived communities of a higher order, perhaps with a clan structure. The chief criterion for aggregating the IC and the TC communities would not be territorialism but membership of different sorts of „corporations” based on genuine and mythical kinship. Thus in this case one would have to apply terms used in anthropological literature, though not always in a consistent manner – lineage and clan (Mauss 1973; Penkala-Gawęcka 1987, 150ff; Szynekiewicz 1987a, 151ff; Wason 1994).

Intragroup diversity

An important problem is definition of the principles which shaped personal relations at the intragroup level. It mainly concerns the question of complexity of the social structure (its internal diversity). Typically, the source for such interpretations is data obtained at necropolises (mainly the burial types and objects deposited in them) as well as the composition of hoards.

One of the ways of describing group differentiation degree assumes that how the dead were furnished with grave goods, the amount of work put in the construction of the grave and its „monumentality” to some degree reflects their status, role and prestige in the world of the living (Gediga 1978, 171; Cobb 1993, 54ff; Müller 1994; Kadrow 2001, 154). However, reservations are raised against excessive identification of grave forms and their furnishing exclusively with the social position of the deceased individual, and other interpretations are proposed, namely that elaborate burial rituals are an effect of the „needs” of the living community (Biehl, Marciniak 2000; see also Vandkilde 1996, 260). An important role in the studies of the status of the dead is played by assessment of the richness of their grave furnishing expressed in points (Mairfort Jr. 1985; Kadrow, Machnikowiec 1992, 66-73; Cobb 1993, 54ff, cf. Shennan S. 1982), with respect to their quality (particularly with reference to objects considered to be exotic or luxurious, and also respecting the type and amount of material

used, labour input, visual effect), and quantity (number of objects and materials used) are concerned².

IC graves exhibit far-reaching diversity in this respect, but most of the data lacks anthropological information, so it does little to increase our understanding of the question.

An analysis of the cemetery in Śmiardowo Krajeńskie, site 6, Krajna, North Poland (Fig. 4A-C; Schäfer 1987), showed the existence of a number of graves that were richer than the others (Fig. 4B-I). The average grading of the furnishing of all IC graves equals 9.7 points. Graves 30 (37 pts), 40 (20 pts) 10 (16 pts), 9a (15 pts), 8 and 75 (11 pts each) stand out clearly. The construction of the graves was almost identical (so-called *Mauergrab* or stone-packing grave), but their size was sometimes different, particularly in the western – „Iwno” part of the cemetery (Fig. 4C). The presence of objects made of metal and amber and the varied materials they were made of may point to a group of high status, prestige or wealth, or at least occupying privileged positions in the community (chieftains, medicine men, blacksmiths, outstanding warriors, people of authority, including the oldest persons in lineage etc.). Concluding from the character of the grave goods (e.g. beads and an amber necklace, *Ösenkopfnadeln*) it could also include some women. Another important observation is that in two older phases of development of the cemetery at Śmiardowo Krajeńskie (both exhibit features of early UC; Fig. 4C), the average grade describing wealth equalled 4.1 points per grave (the most affluent graves are then graded: 20, 13 and 12 pts respectively), i.e. 2.4 times less than in the „Iwno” phase. This is clear evidence of growth in ranking from a relatively low (minimal) to a moderate. However, it was still a simple ranking, sometimes referred to in the literature as *kin/role ranking*, in which the personal

² The following grading scale was adopted: 1 kind of raw material – 0 pt, 2 kinds of raw material – 2 pts, 3 kinds of raw material – 3 pts etc.; objects made of: clay – 1-3 pts, stone – 1-5 pts, flint – 1-5 pts, bone – 1-5 pts, metal – 3-10 pts, amber – 3-10 pts (grading depends on type of object). Copper and bronze scrap was graded lower than complete objects.

rank depends mainly on place in the kinship system and particular social roles (Wason 1994, 37). It does not mean, however, that individuals automatically lived the roles allotted them. Some, thanks to personal skills and negotiation talent were able to win a higher position in the hierarchy. This way they transformed and gave dynamism to a social structure that was traditionally kinship-based. The ranking was based on the rivalry of individuals and groups to achieve the highest possible prestige, status, wealth or power (Shennan 1982; 1986; Wason 1994; Kadrow 2001, 153ff – the concept of „spontaneous” competition; see also Mann 1986).

In the western part of the burial ground at the cemetery in Śmiardowo a circular concentration of graves was observed surrounding grave 8 at a distance of several metres. (Fig. 4B). They were not particularly rich, but could be rather large (Fig. 4B and F). This can be interpreted as showing the ritual practice of burying the dead around the grave of a person of importance (of high prestige, or status³ within a family or lineage). More richly furnished graves were placed in both zones of the necropolis relatively close to one another (Fig. 4B and C); furthermore, in the western part of the necropolis they were more size-diversified. This might mean that in the “Iwno” phase of development of the burial place changes took place in the course of which a group of persons of higher status emerged within a community (coming from the same family, lineage?); this was also communicated posthumously through depositing personal objects of the dead in the graves, which were furthermore less standardised (often bigger) than in the Únětician phase. The furnishing of other cemeteries (almost exclusively pottery as at Iwno, site 2, Pałuki) or single graves (Baranowo, Pałuki – a prestige tulip-like beaker – Fig. 6) varies greatly⁴. Side by side with poorly furnished graves (Łojewo, site 4; Siniarzewo, site 1 and Żegotki, site 1, all Cuiavia – Fig. 7A, B and D, or Lysin, Pałuki – Fig. 7C), have been found richly furnished graves (e.g. Bru-

sy, Pomerania – 40 pts – Fig. 8C). It is in all probability from graves like these that the majority of single finds come, like the gold dagger blade from the area of Inowrocław, Cuiavia (Fig. 8D) or a bronze halberd from Juncewo, Pałuki (Fig. 8E) (Knapowska-Mikołajczykowa 1957; Sarnowska 1969).

In general, the wealth of grave goods in the IC „beaker” phases, measured on a point scale, gets from two to seven points (average 5), while in the late phase it grows at times to over thirty points (average 10 pts). An important social change „measured” by this method – development of ranking from minimal to moderate – took place, therefore, in the early 2nd millennium BC. This data seems to confirm the existence of certain forms of inequality in the analysed communities.

It is sometimes believed that the quality and quantity of the furnishing of the dead in relation to their sex and age can be the basis on which to draw conclusions concerning their position in the social structure. The not particularly numerous anthropological descriptions of the lowland BB suggest that both adults: men (Fig. 7A and D) and women (Fig. 7A and C), as well as children (Fig. 7B) were buried. Unfortunately, lack of data makes it impossible to determine whether everybody enjoyed equal burial opportunities. So far no major differences in grave furnishings have been observed that indicate particular treatment by sex. In Łojewo, site 4, Cuiavia (Fig. 7A) (Koško 1993), triple burial has been observed, in which incomplete corpses of two women were put at the man’s feet. The furnishing of this grave and the arrangement of skeletons does not point to the man’s high status, but rather to his superiority in relation to persons of the opposite sex.

The composition and occasionally the spectacular wealth of the multi-type hoards associated with IC (various bronze and sometimes gold or amber objects) make them one of the more important sources for the reconstruction of social relations and exchange (Bukowski 1998). Seeking the political, economic, and socio-religious reasons for their deposition is one of the more intriguing subjects in archaeology (Bradley 1998; Blajer 1990; 1992; 1999; 2001; Sommerfeld 1994; Vandkilde 1996; 1999; A. i B. Hänsel [eds] 1997; Harding 1999; 2000, 352-367). The opinion has been voiced that some of the hoards are war trophies seized from

³ Cf. understanding the notion of prestige, status and authority – Bernbeck, Müller 1996.

⁴ Unfortunately, the majority are 19th century accidental findings.

the enemy (Rassmann, Schoknecht 1997). Such hypotheses however, which suggest the existence of permanent armed conflicts, considerably narrow the room for interpretation.

It seems that the most plausible concept relates offering valuable, exotic objects to intra- and intergroup (families?, lineages, clans) competition as well as the institution of the potlatch (Mauss 1973; cf. Boas 1921; Buchowski 1987, 288ff; Bradley 1990; Blajer 1992, 103ff; Vandkilde 1996; 1999; A. i B. Hänsel (eds) 1997; Makarowicz 1998a, 259ff; Harding 2000, 352-367), which is present among several societies for instance in the north-western coast of America (Buchowski 1987, 288, with references).

Historical data and ethnological observation provide ample evidence that the fight to gain highest possible prestige took the form of the ceremonious and ostentatious giving away of valuables and various precious items, and in particular of presenting them to rivals (individuals and groups). This way the rivals could be forced to return a valuable gift. In several parts of Europe items of prestige (mainly bronze), became objects of ritual exchange-offering that was not direct (hand to hand). They were given as offerings to gods, thus winning their favours (*do ut des* principle – Hänsel 1997). Simultaneously, such bidding between competing groups, through exclusion of objects from circulation precluded any possibility of their thesaurisation and use. Although the competition could also turn into warfare, it seems that this way of solving disputes was not standard in this part of Europe (general discussion: Keeley 1996; Carman, Harding [eds] 1999; Harding 2000, 271-301; Osdoon *et al.* 2000). If in the northern part of Central Europe (Kristiansen 1998; 1999) and in particular in its southern portion, warfare could be a frequent phenomena – as indicated e.g. by numerous fortified settlements existing at this time mainly to the south of the Carpathian Mountains



Fig. 6. A prestigious „tulip-like” beaker of Iwno Culture.
Photo: Mariusz Kuraszkiwicz. Courtesy of Janusz Czebreszuk.

arch (Osgood *et al.* 2000, 65ff; Kadrow 2001, 84ff), the northern part of East-Central Europe could – owing to the potlatch institution, among other things – avoid such conflicts.

Depositing items of prestige – in particular valuable objects made of bronze, gold and amber – mainly in water environments and bogs, was a ritual characteristic of numerous European societies of the Bronze Age (Bradley 1998, with references). The ritual was also popular with members of IC (e.g. Wąsosz and Wojcieszyn, Cuiavia – Fig. 8A and B) and TC (e.g. Dratów, South-East Poland and Stawiszyce, Little Poland – Fig. 8F and G) (Koško 1979; Blajer 1990; 1998; 2001; Czebreszuk 1996; Makarowicz 1998a); it was alien to BB communities of the south of Poland. Hoards offered by the analysed communities often contained varied and spectacular items: halberds, daggers, axes, *Ösenhalsringen*, *Noppenringen*, earrings, diadems, armllets, greaves etc (Fig. 8). It seems that in the case of IC and TC it was a complex ceremony performed by the group, a ceremony that involved the irretrievable disposal of riches in order to boost the prestige of a group in the eyes of other

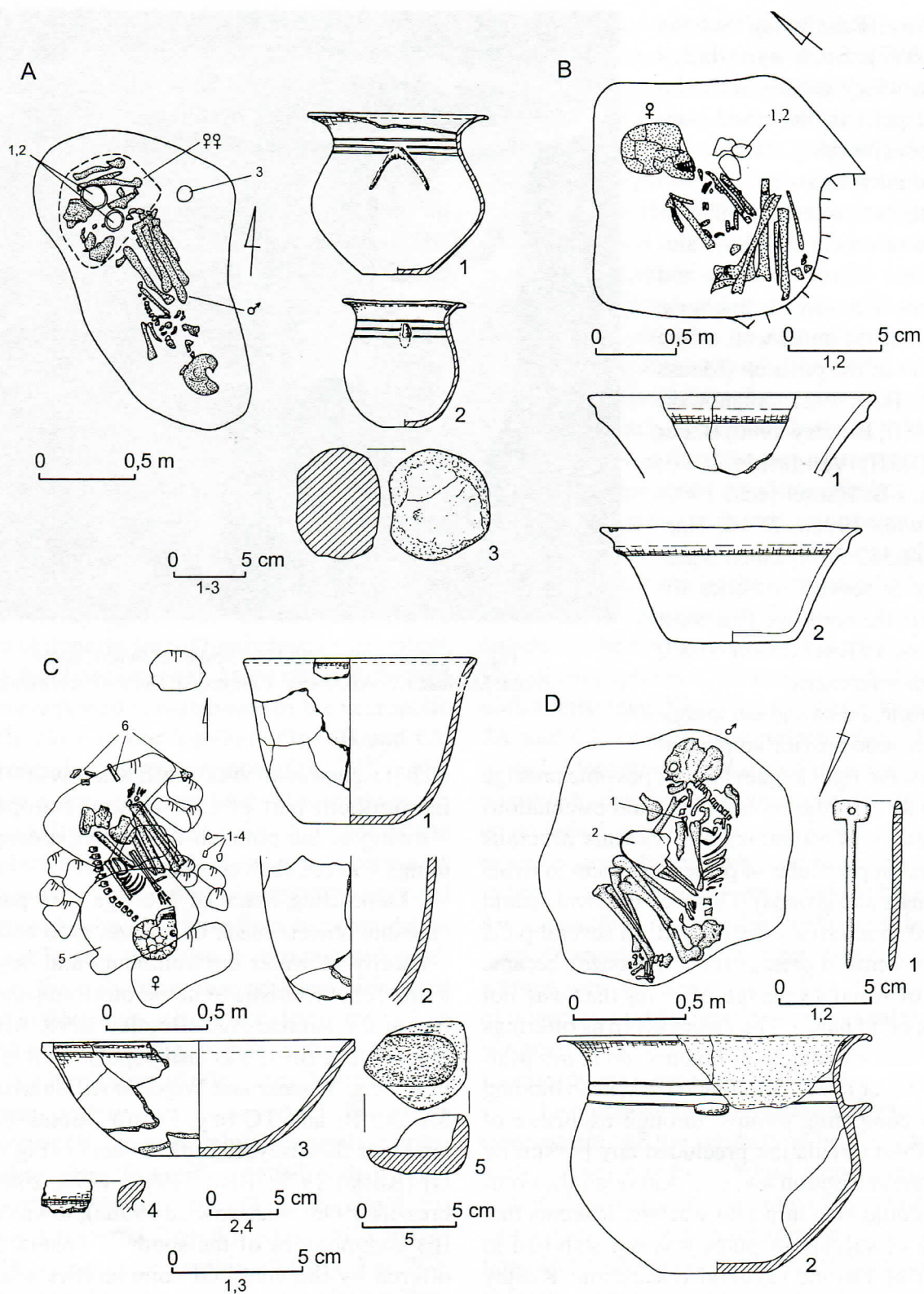


Fig. 7. Examples of Iwno Culture graves.

A. Grave layout and grave goods of Iwno Culture from Łojewo, site 4, Cuiavia. 1, 2 – clay; 3 – stone. Source: Koško 1993.
 B. Grave layout and grave goods of Iwno Culture from Siniarzewo, site 1, Cuiavia. 1, 2 – clay. Source: Makarowicz 1998a.
 C. Grave layout and grave goods of Iwno Culture from Łysin, Cuiavia; a – animal bones; b – quern; c – vessel fragments; 1-4 – clay; 5 – stone. Source: Makarowicz 1998a.
 D. Grave layout and grave goods of Iwno Culture from Żegotki, site 3, Cuiavia. 1 – bone; 2 – clay. Source: Makarowicz 2000a.

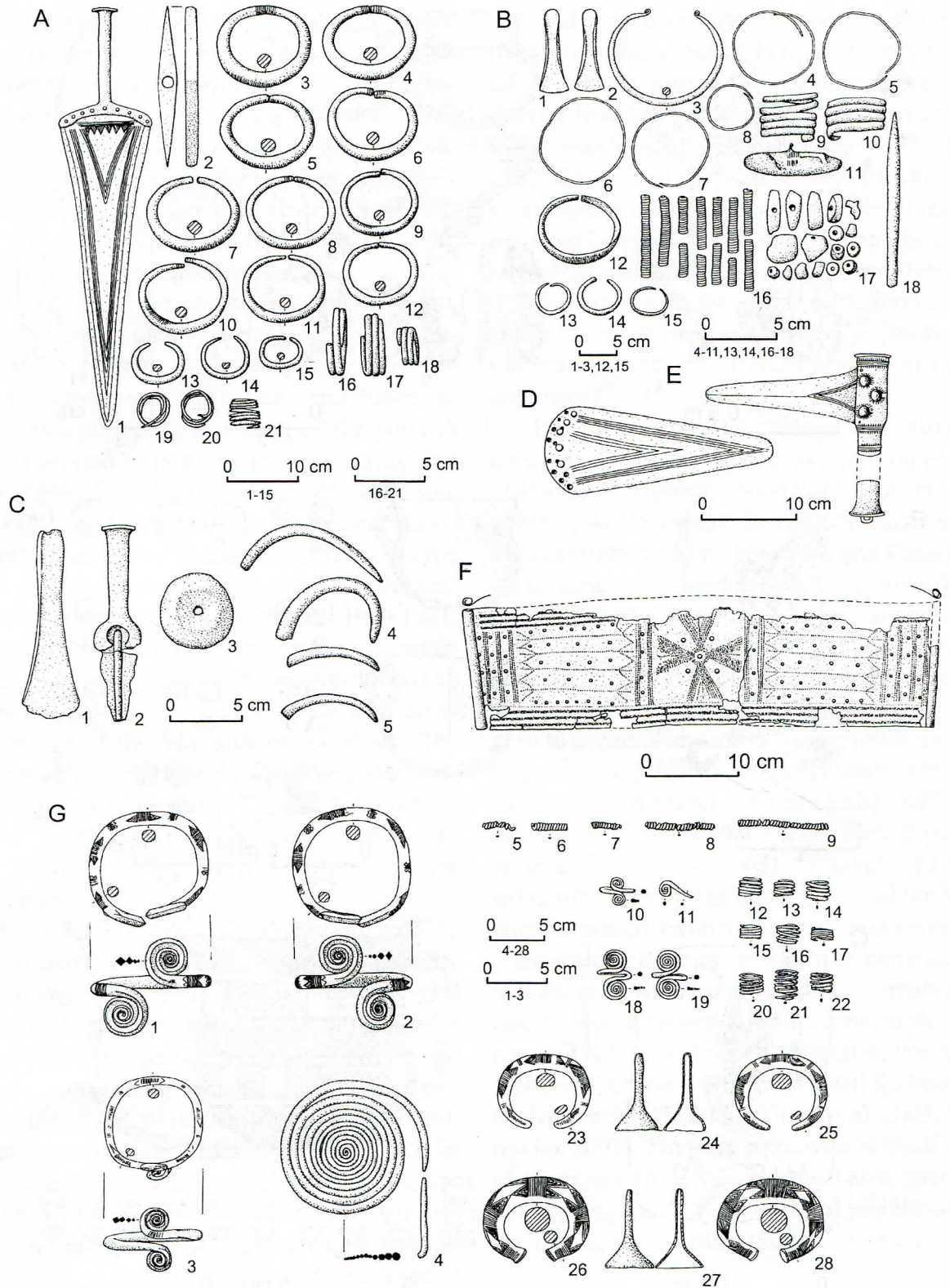


Fig. 8. Examples of prestige goods from hoards and graves.

A. Hoard of Iwno Culture from Wojcieszyn, Cuiavia: 1-3, 9-21 – bronze. B. Hoard of Iwno Culture from Wąsosz, Cuiavia: 1-3, 9, 10, 12-16, 18 – bronze; 4-8, 11 – gold; 17 – amber. C. Grave goods from Iwno Culture barrow in Brusy, Pomerania: 1, 2, 4, 5 – bronze; 3 – amber. D. Gold dagger blade of Iwno Culture from Inowrocław, Cuiavia. E. Bronze halberd of Iwno Culture from Juncewo, Cuiavia. Source: Sarnowska 1969. F. Bronze diadem (part of the Trzciniiec Complex hoard) from Dratów, Lublin Province, South-East Poland. H. Trzciniiec Complex hoard from Stawiszycze, Little Poland. 1-28 – bronze. Source: Blajer 1990.

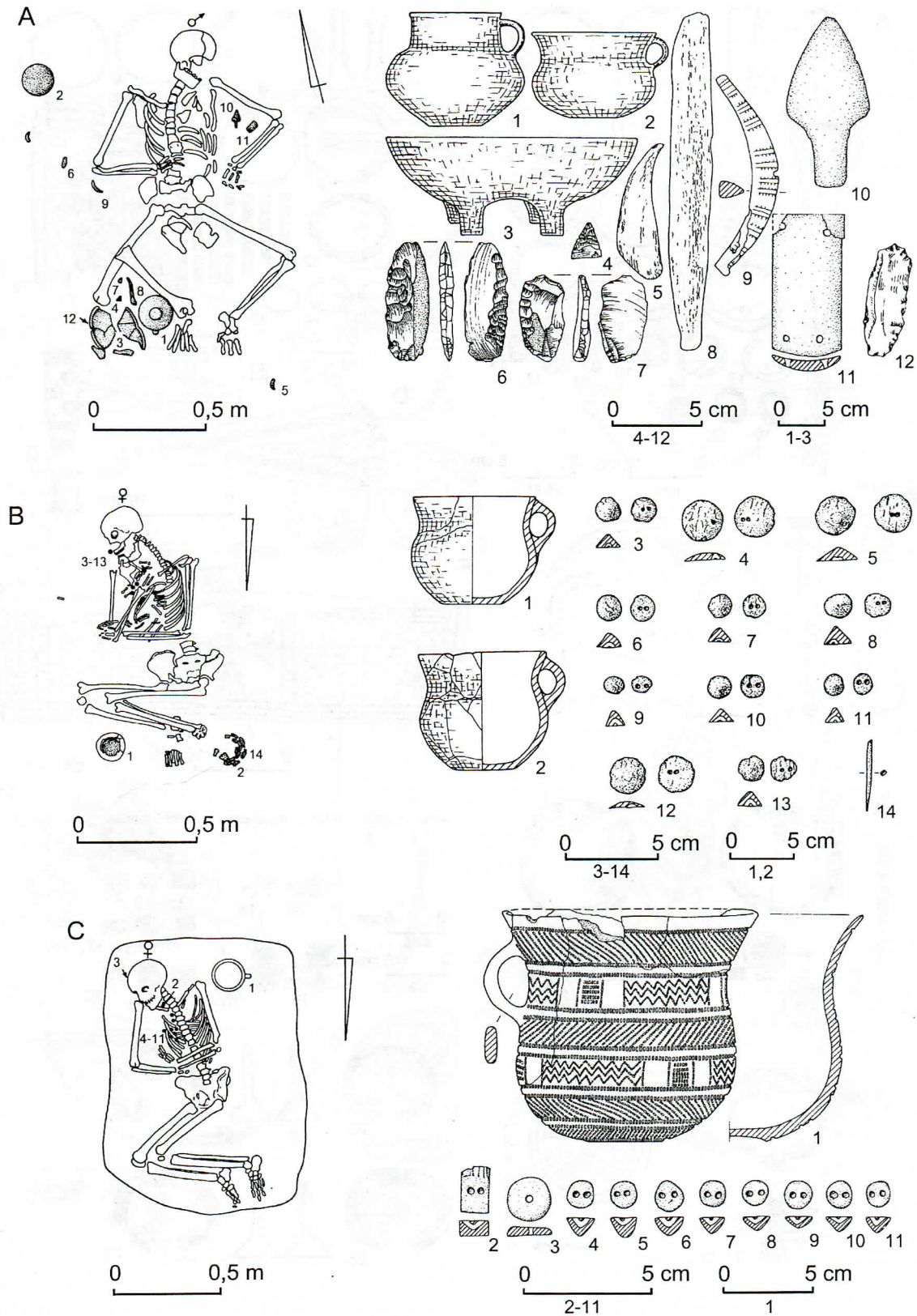


Fig. 9. Bell Beaker graves and grave goods from South Poland.

A. Samborzec, site „Niwa Dworska”, Little Poland: 1-3 – clay; 4, 6, 7, 12 – flint; 5, 8, 9 – bone; 10 – copper; 11 – stone. Source: Kamińska, Kulczycka-Leciejewiczowa 1970. B. Sandomierz, site Wzgórze Zawichojskie, Little Poland: 1, 2 – clay; 3-13 – bone; 14 – copper. Source: Włodarczak, Kowalewska-Marszałek 1998. C. Strachów, Lower Silesia: 1 – clay; 2-11 – amber. Source: Noworyta 1966.

groups. Intense consumption of valuable goods – perhaps collective property (it was unlikely that it was owned by individual families, but more probably was the property of unions of families, lineages, or clans) – offered „for ever” to a god was evidence of a group’s greatness (generosity), consolidated its prestige, unity and indivisibility (Vandkilde 1996, 276ff; cf. Bradley 1998; Harding 2000, 352–368). The more such objects it was possible to amass, even if only for later ostentatious disposal, and the bigger its splendour, the greater the humiliation of the competing neighbouring groups. The world of interpersonal and intergroup relations in communities practising this form of the potlatch revolved around notions of prestige, unity and dignity. Loss of prestige equalled loss of the soul (Mauss 1973, 266), hence the unending competition for prestige yielded a vast number of multi-type hoards. Ethnological analogies show that the potlatch (which means both: gift and food – Boas 1921; Buchowski 1987, 289) is a ritual performed mainly by societies with unstable intragroup hierarchy (Mauss 1973, 347), in which struggle for leadership was one of the *leitmotifs* of social life. The regulatory role of the potlatch should be underlined; by taking part in it the parties avoided more serious forms of rivalry which might lead to armed conflicts (Mauss 1973; Bradley 1998; contra – Gluckmann 1963⁵).

This collective trait in the organisation of the potlatch ceremony does not preclude the possibility of practising it on the individual level. Several ethnological analogies point to the obligation of exchanging goods – giving, receiving, returning and destroying-consuming valuable objects as an element in the social strategies of particular individuals at a personal level (Mauss 1973, 266ff). It let them „save face”, strengthen their prestige, and sometimes reach a higher community status for themselves and their families (Mauss 1973, 263). The potlatch, as a specific system of exchange of

gifts and various services, was not a typical market transaction but a mutual obligation on the part of whole communities and their segments, sometimes referred to as hierarchical fraternities and secret associations (Mauss 1973, 218; Łoppot 1987; Eliade 1997; Czebreszuk 2001, 50ff). It was a form of circulation–exchange of goods, practiced mainly by peripheral, or rather marginal communities, which participated in the gift-giving economy. Hence it is difficult to consider the „Iwno” and „Trzcinniec” deposits of exotic objects as physical currency and the effect of the unrestrained process of demand and supply⁶.

Postprocessual archaeology has introduced a variety of new and varied concepts aimed at explaining the BB phenomenon in terms of elite superculture⁷, which breaks the hitherto existing order of organisation of late Neolithic and Chalcolithic social structure as predominantly based on descent (kinship). Bell Beakers populations have been identified as groups characterised by advanced ranking, evident individualizing tendencies, use of prestige objects made of exotic materials and complex rituals to accomplish various strategies of social life (e.g. Burges, Sehnnan 1976; Shenann 1976; 1982; 1986; 1993; Waldren, Kennard [eds] 1987; Benz, van Willigen [eds] 1998; Nicolis [ed.] 2001; Czebreszuk, Szmyt [eds] 2003). Although data collected in the upper basins of the Oder and the Vistula does not present (with a number of exceptions) such a spectacular picture, it does not contradict the hypothesis of BB being an elite superculture (recently: Wojciechowski 1987; Czebreszuk, Makarowicz 1995; Kowalewska-Marszałek, Włodarczak 1998, 64ff; Czebreszuk, Szmyt 2001; Kadrow 2001; Budziszewski, Haduch, Włodarczak 2003; Makarowicz 2003). They are perceived as small groups of strangers from the Danube basin, that differ anthropologically from the local populations and are distinguished from them also in the cultural

⁵ According to the concept of Max Gluckman (1963, 18), the author of the conflict theory, such rituals did not neutralise but intensified conflicts and tensions only to eventually evidence solidarity and unity of the group in the face of contradictions (see: Dohnal 2001, 147).

⁶ In the multi-type hoard of Wojcieszyn standardisation can be observed only in one type of objects – bracelet of adjoining ends.

⁷ *Contra*: cf. some papers from Nicolis 2001 (ed.), e.g. Harrison, Mederos Martín 2001, 122; Kalicz-Schreiber, Kalicz 2001; Vandkilde 2001, 348.



Fig. 10. A prestigious one-handeled beaker of Bell Beakers from Beradź, Little Poland.

sense (Machnik 1987; Budziszewski, Haduch, Włodarczak 2003, 157ff.).

The majority of cemeteries and single graves of the South Polish BB enclave do not provide information from which to draw unequivocal conclusions concerning the status, sex and age of the dead. Only individual graves have been found in the region. Members of both sexes as well as children were buried; however, owing to the unrepresentative character of the data, definition of precise proportions is impossible. Of over 50 graves uncovered in BB burial-ground, only 16 crossed the threshold of 10 points, 4 exceeded 20 points, and 2 – 30 points. The most affluent were graves of men of *senilis* and *maturus* age groups. Of particular interest are: grave 3 in Beradź (39 pts), grave 3 (the so-called warrior's grave) in Samborzec, site „Niwa Dworska” (35 pts⁸, Fig. 9A), both Little Poland (Kamieńska, Kulczycka-Leciejewiczowa 1970; Harrison 1980; Budziszewski, Haduch, Włodarczak 2003). The slightly less affluent graves of adult women, e.g. Strachów, Lower Silesia (24 pts, Fig. 9C), Sandomierz, site Wzgórze Zawichojskie (19 pts, Fig. 9B) and Złota, site „Nad Wawrem”, grave

4 (17 pts), both Little Poland (Żurowski 1932; Noworyta 1976; Kowalewska-Marszałek, Włodarczak 1998). Women's graves are in general more diversified in this respect and one often finds among them relatively poorly furnished (e.g. Samborzec, graves 6 and 8 – women of *maturus* and *adultus/maturus* age groups – 4 pts ea.). Graves of children were also scantily furnished (e.g. Złota, grave 3 – 1 pt, grave 6 – 3 pts; Samborzec, grave 1 – 2 pts, graves 2 and 4 – 3 pts ea., all of *infans II* age group; Żerniki Górne, Little Poland, grave 1 – 3 pts). None of the 15 graves of the largest necropolis in Pietrowice Wielkie, Głubczyce Upland (Bukowska-Gedigowa 1965), exceeded the 9 points mark on the affluence scale. The average wealth score of all BB graves in Little Poland and Silesia is 6.7 points. In the case of men, it is 15 points, women 11.7 and children 3.7 points.

Apart from vessels, men's graves contain mainly military accessories: wrist guards, arrow-headbelt smoothers, arrowheads, items of copper and bronze (e.g. dagger) and (unpreserved) bows; ornaments are also present, e.g. bone model of the bow. Women's graves were furnished with bone and amber buttons with V-shaped perforation, copper and amber pendants as well as copper awls. Prestigious beakers, which were perhaps used during libatory rituals meant to integrate the group (Burgess, Shennan 1976; Sherratt 1987), are not very frequent in

⁸ I wish to express my gratitude to Dr. Piotr Włodarczak for rendering data concerning BB cemetery in Samborzec accessible.

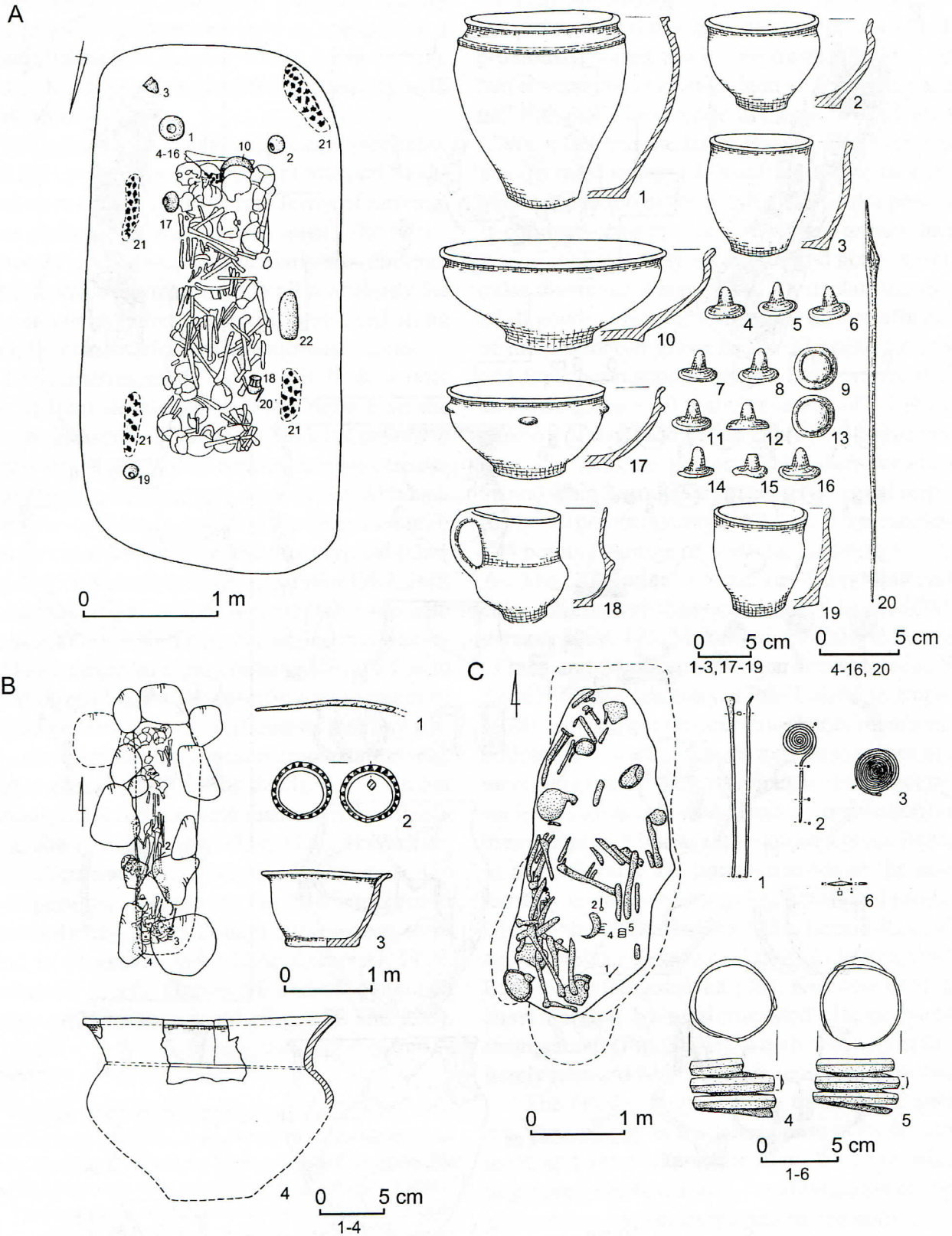


Fig. 11. Graves and grave goods of the Trzciniiec Complex from North Poland.

A. Wolica Nowa, site 1 (grave 5), Cuiavia: 1-13; 10; 17-19 – clay; 4-16; 20 – bronze; 21 – charcoal; 22 – stone. B. Gustorzyn, site 1, Cuiavia: 1, 2 – bronze; 3, 4 – clay. C. Radojewice, site 29, Cuiavia: 1-5 – bronze. Source: Grygiel 1987; Makarowicz 2000c.

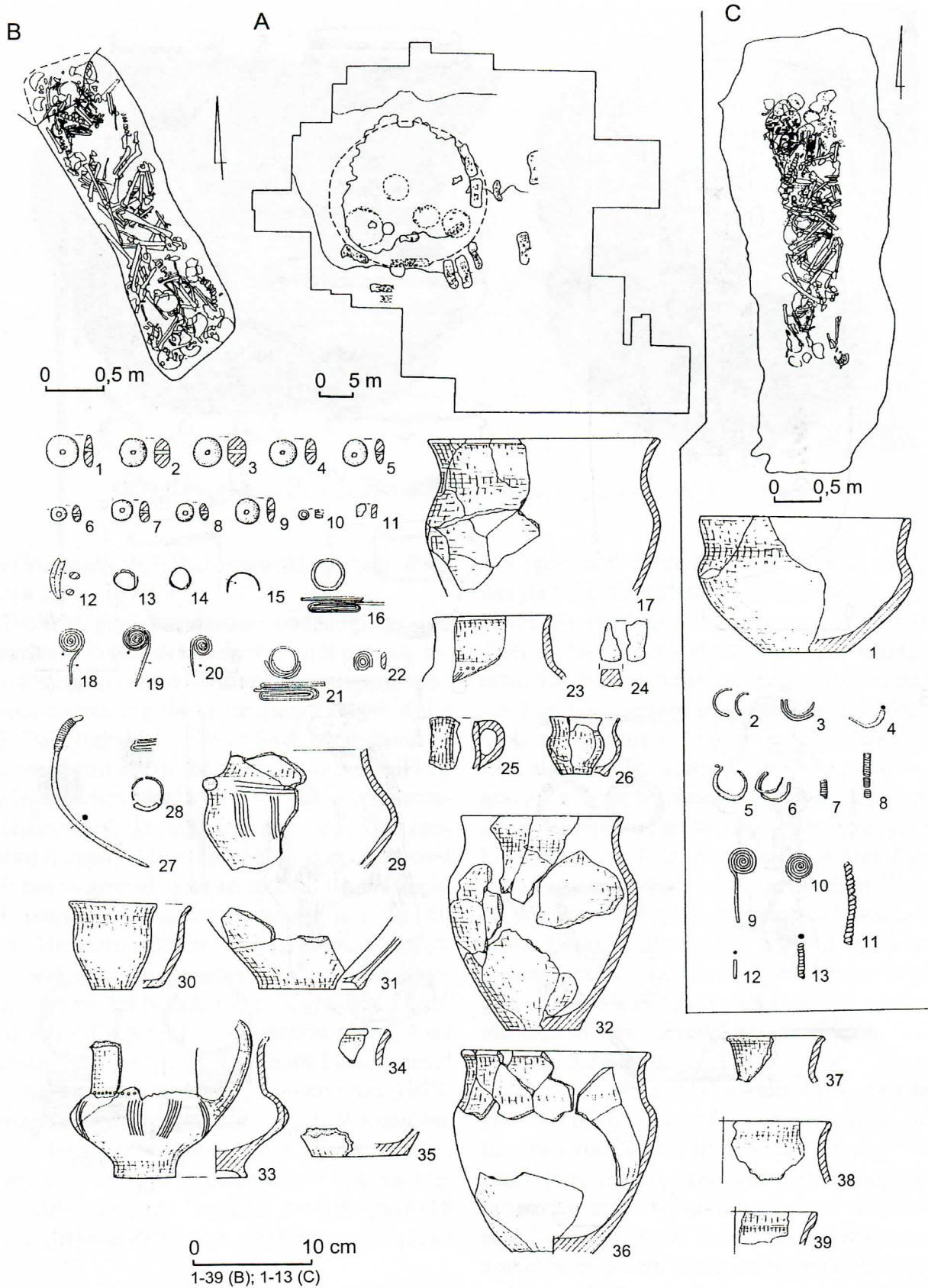


Fig. 12. Trzciniac Complex cemetery in Żerniki Górne, Little Poland.

A. Plan of the cemetery. B. Grave 99 and grave goods: 1-10 – amber; 11, 24 – flint; 12 – bone; 13-16, 18-23 – bronze; 17, 23, 25-39 – clay. C. Grave 98 and grave goods: 1 – clay; 2-12 – bronze. Source: Kempisty 1978, Włodarczak 1998.

this enclave of BB (Fig. 10). They are mainly found in men's graves, and only in one case in a woman's (Strachów, Lower Silesia – Fig. 9C: 1). Children's graves were provided exclusively with vessels (mostly 1-2).

The quoted data points to a certain inequality in the BB community of the upper Oder and Vistula basins, and to rather moderate forms of ranking, whose participants were mostly men. The social position of women and – particularly so – children can be described as marginal. In all probability the analysed communities were also organised along principles characteristic of kinship-based units.

The societies of TC, particularly at a later stage of their development, even more than the northern „Beakers” (IC) reveal a model of collective life. It is evidenced in data from numerous cemeteries in which mass graves are often found. Although it is not the only burial ritual of the discussed unit, it can be considered one of the most typical (Gardawski 1959; Kempisty 1978; Kłosińska 1987, 36ff; Włodarczak 1998; Makarowicz 2000c; see also Łysenko 2001). A family grave or one that was related to a lineage (or clan) contained from a few to several dozen bodies. In specific arrangement of the dead (relatives?) it is difficult to find any distinctions which might suggest hierarchisation (e.g. a higher status of any of the dead). Among other locations, mass burials were discovered in Wolica Nowa, site 1 – 23 persons (Fig. 11A), Gustorzyn, site 1 – 27 persons (Fig. 11B), and Radojewice, site 29 – 7 persons, all Cuiavia (Fig. 11C). In Żerniki Górne cemetery, Little Poland 129 persons were buried in 15 graves (Fig. 12A; Kempisty 1978; Włodarczak 1998). Graves 98 and 99 contained remains of 21 persons each⁹ (Fig. 12B and 12C).

⁹ 11 men (10 in *maturus* age group, 1 in *adultus*), 7 women (2 *iuvenis*, 2 *adultus*, 3 *maturus*) and 3 children (2 *infans II*, 1 *infans II – iuvenis*) were identified in grave 98; grave 99 contained remnants of 6 men (2 *adultus*, 4 *maturus*), 9 women (3 *iuvenis*, 2 *adultus*, 4 *maturus*) and 5 children (2 *infans I*, 1 *infans I, II*, 2 *infans II*) and 1 person of *iuvenis* age group of unidentified sex – Kempisty 1978, 206, 214ff.

Subsequent burials in the grave, which was reopened several times, and the manner in which the previously buried dead were treated, show a certain recession of individualism in this sphere of ritual life, that was so vivid in Corded Ware Culture (CWC), BB and the Early Bronze Age communities. In most cases it is also impossible to assign goods deposited in the grave to particular persons. In comparison to the previously cited groups, these were not particularly numerous and not as spectacular. However, it is possible to calculate the value of all goods deposited in the graves. The affluence of the Gustorzyn grave equals 27 points (average of 1.9 pts per person) (Grygiel 1987), of the Wolica Nowa grave – 50 points (average of 2.1 pts per person), of the Radojewice grave – 26 points (average of 3.7 pts per person). The values for graves 98 and 99 in Żerniki Górne cemetery equal respectively: 50 points (average of 2.4 pts per person) and 104 points (average of 5 pts per person).

The „Trzcinięc” funeral rite did not put particular emphasis on the sex and age of the dead (Włodarczak 1998, 175; Makarowicz 2000c). 65 burials of men and 64 of women were documented at the Żerniki Górne cemetery, Little Poland (Kempisty 1978). The almost identical number of members of both sexes in the necropolis may be evidence of an increasing importance of women in the „Trzcinięc” societies (compared with „Beaker” population) and their winning a burial right within a given lineage or clan. Several TC burial-grounds in the entire territory under discussion, e.g. Łubna and Okalew, Great Poland (Gardawski 1951; Kłosińska 1987), and Guciów or Tyszowce, Lublin Province, South-East Poland (Rogozińska 1961; Kuśnierz 1990) are characterised by agglomerated-cluster barrow arrangement (Fig. 3B-D), which probably reflects family relations within a larger unit (lineage or clan).

The cited examples show that the TC societies, particularly in the latter phase of its development, underwent changes in social structure, which, in general, consisted in the egalitarianisation of intra-group relations, i.e. deepening of the collectivisation tendencies already present in IC societies and early TC structures and minimalisation of ranking.

Forms of power

From the sociological point of view the notion of power is very amorphous. The applicable definitions and typologies of power – just like definitions of culture – make the concept extremely ambiguous (in archaeological literature e.g. Miller, Tilley 1984; Wason 1994; Bernbeck, Müller 1996). Power is perceived as a means of communication, a factor legitimising authority, a source of repression, but also as a source of knowledge, as ability to transform the material and ideal spheres (Miller, Tilley 1984, 5ff; Hodder 1995, 91). According to Max Weber, it denotes „a chance to assert your will, also against resistance, within the framework of a certain social relationship (...)” (Weber 2002, 39ff). Michael Mann distinguishes four sources of power (power organizing factors): ideological, political, economic and military (IEMP model – Mann 1986, 22ff; see also: Kristiansen 1998, 60; Harding 2000, 392). It must be added that with respect to past societies the identification of the form of power is one of the more speculative questions.

Data from BB and TC cemeteries show the privileged position of adult males (e.g. the leaders of kinship-based groups, warriors, blacksmiths-metallurgists, medicine men, the oldest person in a given lineage). This is a frequent characteristic of socio-cultural systems whose production economy is based on pastoralism as broadly understood, among whom the status of women is almost always lower than that of men.

According to some scholars, since the times of CWC and BB, and in particular in the Bronze Age, the world of the northern part of Central Europe was „male-oriented” (Shennan 1993, 194; Vandkilde 1996, 279ff; Makarowicz 1998a; Czebreszuk 2001; cf. Kristiansen 1998; 1999). These were adult males – a collective, a specific form of an elite, which appointed the leader, a *group-oriented chieftain* (Renfrew 1974) – that enjoyed the full range of rights and privileges. Power was not hereditary, and the chiefs administered the common goods rather than possessed them. They played the role of the leader owing to their position in the system of kinship and individual skills: wisdom, experience, courage, diligence. Power was thus related to presence of people who enjoyed charisma and authority within

the group¹⁰. They build their position based on personal achievements and „teamwork” ability that secured success: uninterrupted existence and continuous character of the group’s development. The said elites (the so-called *consolidated elites* according to Vandkilde 1996, 276, or clan elites) – a group of adult males – legitimised their power using extensive rituals, in which possession of exotic objects as well as – paradoxically – their disposal through giving away and various forms of the potlatch played a key role.

It seems that in the categorization proposed by Max Weber, this form of execution of power can be described as close to *traditional reign*, i.e. obedience of a group of people to certain or all commands, based on a universal belief in the sanctity of eternal tradition and legitimacy of persons whom tradition endowed with authority (Weber 2002, 158, 160). It can be categorised as *power to*, an ability to operate in the world, rather than as *power over* which refers to domination and social control (Miller, Tilley 1984, 5; Cobb 1993, 50-51; Hodder 1995, 97). This type of power did not require extensive institutionalisation to exact performance of certain obligations. Elites consolidated their social image through permanent recreation of complex rituals meant to integrate the group and through observance of traditional norms of cohabitation. The leader and the elite were indicated by rules that tradition had bequeathed. However, obedience to the chief was not only a result of „bestowal by tradition”, but also a recognition of the unique character of his personal qualities. He was a regulator of the whole community’s behaviour, the custodian of tradition, but not its sole interpreter. For this reason, his power can be described as power „for” somebody rather than „over” somebody. It does not mean that entities of power (chiefs, elites) should be unable to accomplish what were their own particular interests and present them as global problems. Raised in particular by Marxism-oriented archaeologists, concepts of masking social inequalities, ritual neutra-

¹⁰ Cf. differentiation between influence, rule and authority as well as charisma and prestige acc. to Müller, Bernbeck 1996, 2, inspired by Max Weber’s theories (Weber 2002, 158ff).

lisation of contradictions between the interests of elites and these of the „populace” or manipulating symbols (mystifying the reality in order to obliterate the real social relations) aimed at maintaining power and deriving economic benefits (more: Kristiansen 1989; Cobb 1993, 72ff; Hodder 1995, 78-102 and 105; Vandkilde 1996, 284), are credible, albeit not universal. With reference to the societies under discussion they are practically unverifiable. This briefly discussed model of power appears closest both to BB communities in both analysed regional versions and those of TC.

External relations

Social interaction between IC and other groups was very intense. Apart from parallel transmission of cultural patterns and transfer of people within the North European BB Province, and in general within „the world of late Northern Neolithic Age” (late GAC, late SGC, epi-CWC communities), contacts with the UC centres along the axes North – South and North – South-West gain importance at the end of 3rd millennium. These mainly consisted in exchange of the Baltic amber, which was obtained directly or indirectly by members of IC in return for items made of bronze and gold in the Únětician style. In some approaches they played an important role in the social life of the Northern Beakers, stimulating the functioning of the entire cultural system (Koško 1979, 169ff; contra: Bukowski 1998, 104). They were exotic objects – requisites used by the community (mainly in ritual hoarding), by individuals (to emphasize the rank of the dead and his/her living family) and in rituals aimed at winning and maintaining power, communicating high status, or confirming prestige.

Populations of the southern BB sometimes entered into interaction with communities of the late CWC (2500-2200 BC), who were similar in social organisation (the model in which males – warriors – dominate) and in material culture (Włodarczak, Kowalewska-Marszałek 1998, 64). The role played by Beakers is also stressed in establishing the social structures of the Proto-Mierzanowice Culture (Kadrow 2001) as well as the Proto-Únětice Culture

(Wojciechowski 1987). The BB population was characterised by its mobility. Some anthropological analyses in Little Poland show differences between male skeletons and representatives of the local populations (Kadrow 1995, 115; Budziszewski, Haduch, Włodarczak 2003). Only female skeletons exhibited local characteristics (connections between BB men and local women?). These observations agree with opinions, that were subjected to severe criticism at some hands since the 1980's, considering BB to be a „male culture”, which was also supposed to account for its mobility (Gerhardt 1976; Czarnetzki 1984; see: Harrison 1980; Shennan 1982; 1986; Waldren, Kennard [eds] 1987). In their ritual life these communities used a variety of prestige objects made of exotic materials which did not occur in these areas (copper daggers or amber buttons with V-shaped perforation). This bears witness to the widespread contacts of the „Beaker” people and the intensity of exchanges with communities that had access to these materials.

TC communities were characterised by no less intense contacts with a variety of cultural units (Dąbrowski 1972; Czebreszuk, Makarowicz, Szmyt 1998; Makarowicz 1998a, 116-159). In a sense, however, they remained out of the Early Bronze Age world: they only absorbed some of the achievements of the era. The inventory of TC does not contain such spectacular objects as is the case with BB. Relatively scarce and frequently imported were products of bronze (Fig. 11), made in the style of the late UC and the TuC style (Blajer 1998, 2001; Makarowicz 1998a; 2000b). Objects made of amber and other exotic materials were relatively rare. It is a very plausible hypothesis that at this time private aspirations of individuals to reach high status with control of the distribution of resources and of circulation of prestige objects as elements of intragroup competition subsided to a large extent. Ideology externalising itself in ritual behaviour was oriented towards the affirmation of communal values. Despite maintaining broad contacts with peripheral UC, OC, FC and TuC communities, which were characterised by higher forms of ranking (stratification), the „Trzciniec” communities remained a Late Neolithic formation until the end (Czebreszuk 1998; 2001; Makarowicz 2001b).

Intergroup exchange in ancient communities was never a purely economic transaction, but had major importance for ceremonial life, specific ritual settings, and various different scenarios („a comprehensive social fact” according to Marcel Mauss 1973). Surely the most important were gift-giving exchanges related to festivity celebrations in the ritual year. One of the places within the cultural province where they could be held was the enclosure at Biskupin, site 2a, Pałuki, North Poland (Grossmann 1998). Here there was found a system of two ditches with interconnections located on a plateau measuring 2 hectares (Fig. 2B) several metres above the surrounding wetlands and bogs. No structures were erected within the ditches, but traces of hearths were found by the passes. The enclosure was used for over 700 years by IC, and then by TC (third phases of use – Grossmann 1998, 191), which seems to preclude its purely mercantile character. Presence of numerous Early Bronze Age hoards in the vicinity of the site in question may indirectly confirm this (Koško 1979).

The exchange of raw materials and finished objects of bronze and amber is often connected with the institution of the *itinerant blacksmith* or *priest-blacksmith* (Sangmeister 1972; Koško 1979, 172ff; Sherratt 1994; Vandkilde 1996, 265; Makarowicz 1998a, 250ff; 2000d; see also Harding 2000, 236ff), i.e. with specialist metallurgists popularising bronze products far away from the place where they were produced (cf. Kristiansen 1998, 379 – warrior chiefs/bronzesmiths). The same people (mainly from the Central Germany area – Koško 1979, 181ff) were also operating within the „Iwno” and later „Trzciniec” communities (Makarowicz 1998a, 250ff). It appears probable, and has been confirmed by contemporary ethnographic analogies (e.g. Larick 1991) and comparative religion studies (see: Eliade 1993), that such people were hardly travelling at their will („free smiths”) taking their possessions with them. Smith-metallurgists were linked with a particular cultural environment, and appeared in a certain socio-economic context. Such individual had his workshop in one village; this was his permanent stations, from which they penetrated other settlements, introducing the knowledge of metallurgy and replenishing inventories with items made of copper, bronze and gold (Vandkilde

1996, 265ff). Useful from the cognitive point of view is the proposal of Humphrey Case (1987) and Janet Levy (1991) to distinguish two kinds of blacksmiths: „highly skilled artisans (constituting elite circles) and independent metalworkers producing utilitarian objects for local society” (Vandkilde 1996, 265). These last were not entirely strangers to other members of the community. Although they probably stood out among them for their status, prestige, range of power, knowledge, or wealth, they nevertheless carried out mainly group, not individual goals.

There is no unquestionable direct evidence confirming the existence of native metallurgy in the IC communities. We have got indirect evidence in the form of specialised chisel-shaped tools commonly associated with metalworking in certain graves attributed to this culture, and also rare graves containing metals and amber (Sarnowska 1969; Koško 1979, with references). There are hints (e.g. clay tuyères) that bronze production at local level was developed by post-Iwno TC societies as early as the middle of the first half of 2nd millennium BC (Makarowicz 1998a, 252; 2000b, 228ff). Participation of a group of professional metallurgists in long distance exchange of amber and metal items appears plausible. The range of the exchange, which probably involved other materials and objects (e.g. skins, furs, fabrics, honey, horses¹¹ and cattle – cf. Barnard, Good 1984) might suggest that it was not a „spontaneous” phenomenon, but one stimulated and controlled by the elites (Koško 1979, 183-193). It seems however, that such control did not require a major input of labour, such as the establishment of a chain of emporia (stage sites on the amber trail along which Baltic succinite was transported), managerial staff, developed system of redistribution or institutionalised and hereditary chieftaincy. In the case of IC and TC, the group of adult males of each community played the role of the elite that appointed the leader who represented the interests of the entire community (*group-oriented chieftain* – see: Renfrew 1974). Thus, it seems that operation in the

¹¹ Cf. presence of horse remains in IC and TC sites (Makarowicz 1998a).

technological-utilitarian and symbolic spheres, including production and exchange of exotic objects, took place within a network of interactions created by kinship-based structures.

Individualism vs. collectivism

Processes of group and individual identity creation are one of the major factors that constitute social structures. The problem of the relation between the individual and the community in the beginnings of the Early Bronze Age is most often considered in the individualizing perspective (Shennan 1982; 1986; 1986a; Sherratt 1994, 259ff; Hodder 1995, 22-26). It was from this view that the above question of *itinerant metalworkers* who co-formed social elites, was considered. As numerous scholars have pointed out, the effects of the dialectic relation individual – community are sometimes one of the main axes along which processes of cultural change are generated (Leach 1954; Hodder 1984, 45ff; 1985, 7ff; 1995; see also: Kadrow 1995, 10; 2001, 20). Most often it is believed that an individual is not forced to passive acceptance and detailed recreation of approved social patterns, but that he/she can exert influence upon shaping ideology and relations within the group through varied negotiation strategies (Hodder 1995, 22). He/she can take advantage of the ambiguity of symbols used in ritual acts, which makes various interpretations possible and facilitates making individual choices (Leach 1954, 16; Kuper 1987, 206; Kadrow 1995, 10). The concept seems to be rooted in a certain anthropology of man, which – chiefly as a means of getting over the impersonality and systematicity of adaptative visions of culture – recognizes the individual as the main subject of cultural changes.

While in general approving of the views that deny the necessity for an individual to adjust himself to every rule of social life, one only has to state that particular groups of interest (elites, age- and profession-based groups, secret associations, hierarchical fraternities etc) based on natural or cultural criteria, exercised a much stronger force of persuasion. It seems that social relations within IC and TC were regulated primarily by the corporate

ideology of the group, for which collective objectives still dominated over the freedom of behaviour of the individual and his or her particular aspirations. However, it has to be stressed that the collectivism and corporatism in these cases was not identical with egalitarianism. Members of the collective, i.e. all adult males, enjoyed – as previously emphasised – a higher social position than other members of the community.

The above mentioned strategies of intragroup negotiations could at their best ease the tension between the individual and the group by modifying the kinship-oriented position of particular persons (or lobbying groups). They did not, however, question the inner order and authority of a community in general. It was only with time, particularly after the beginning of the 2nd millennium BC, that the phenomenon of concentration of power in the hands of individuals began to grow. These people (*new elites* – Vandkilde 1996, 276ff) represented a new, expansive „class”, which strove to change the conservative habits of the community. Of particular importance here was long-distance exchange between IC and UC societies and also the ideology popular with its elites. Disclosure of individualising tendencies (appearance of *individualising chieftains*) is not a proof of substantial changes of IC social structure in the late phase of its development (2050/2000-1800 BC). These changes appear not to have had dramatic (revolutionary) character and – particularly in the area of ideology and its ritual exemplifications – made rather futile attempts to transform the social relations based on collectivist ideology of the group.

Distinction of two opposing socio-cultural tendencies within the analysed societies may prove productive and useful when discussing relations between collectivism and individualism (cf. Vandkilde 1996, 276). The objective of the first of tendency, which was represented by the traditional elites, was to maintain social relations unaltered: to preserve structures based on kinship relations in order to secure stability of the group's development. The other tendency was promoted by the *new elite*, which strove – in an increasingly effective way – to take control over the group through control of the distribution of exotic items and by seizing any surplus production of subsistence goods (Rowlands

1987, 7). It seems that in the social model of BB and TC the traditional (*consolidated*) elites prevailed (Makarowicz 1998a, 260ff).

The dominant feature of „Iwno” and early „Trzciniec” burials, i.e. burying individuals separately, was not a unique phenomenon in this part of Europe. It reflects the tendency to growing individualisation already evident in SGC (and more widely in CWC) communities, which was later to be continued by BB, UC and in other Early Bronze Age groupings. Personalisation of burials can only point to a greater importance of the individual in the group than in Neolithic communities; in no way, however, does it prejudice the character of this promotion. The grave goods are considered to be objects related to a particular individual, informing about his status, prestige, function in the community, „profession”, sex or age. Rich grave furnishings might then would thus be a visible sign of their individual claims and permanent growth of importance. These phenomena could, in certain cases, lead to emergence of a new type of social relations – stratification, in which the social status was frequently inherited (cf. Gilman 1981; Mann 1986; Wason 1994, 38ff; Vandkilde 1996; 1999; Kristiansen 1998; Harding 2000; Kadrow 2001). Relations between both these tendencies – probably present already in an earlier period – could lead to major intragroup conflicts, resulting at times in structural changes.

Lacking spectacular examples of individual wealth comparable to central and peripheral UC communities (*Fürstengraber* – e.g. Łęki Małe, Helmsdorf and Leubingen), the Lowland BB (IC) analysed in the present paper seem to have remained traditionalistic: unstratified, continuing social structures based on kinship bonds, more collectivistic and corporative than individualistic.

This question has received extensive literary treatment as regards to „genuine” BB (Harrison 1980; Guilaine [ed.] 1994; Waldren, Kennard [eds] 1987; Benz, van Willigen [eds] 1998; Nicolis [ed.] 2001). The „Beaker” communities of this part of Europe are considered particularly individualistic, mainly on account of following a certain funeral ritual that was dominated by individual burials furnished with grave goods, surely the personal possessions of the dead. Data from the South Polish enclaves of the BB confirms these rules but does not show that the institutionalised form of advanced ranking (stratification) existed in this population.

After 1700 BC one can observe a certain devaluation of the individualising tendencies and regression of the *new elite* in the TC community, manifested in the common character of the collective burials and depersonalisation of the grave furnishing (Kłosińska 1987; Górski 1994; Makarowicz 2000c). It was probably related to the decline of UC and disappearance of the influence exerted by its attractive social patterns.

CONCLUSION

The characteristics and development tendencies of BB (IC) and TC social structures in the discussed territory in the period between the middle of the 3rd and the end of the 2nd millennium BC, can be presented by means of a generalised diagram (Fig 13).

The social life of BB and TC in north-eastern part of Central Europe was to a large degree shaped by competition between particular descent-based groups (lineages, clans) as well as individuals and their families for prestige, status, power and wealth. The key factor setting social behaviour in order and integrating the group was kinship, which was related to the cultural system of spouse selection, and in particular exchange of women. Un-

doubtedly, other factors, sometimes contradictory to the kinship principle – e.g. the particular ambitions and aspirations of individuals – and also natural conditions, economic strategies or territorial behaviour influenced the social structure.

The smallest units of social organisation were the nuclear families. These families and combinations between them (extended families, lineages) inhabited a settlement and used a burial place. Rivalry between kinship groups (lineages, clans) led to extensive rituals aimed at strengthening the unity and solidarity of the group and integrating the individual with it. In this case they showed the ideal pattern of social relations. Among other things,

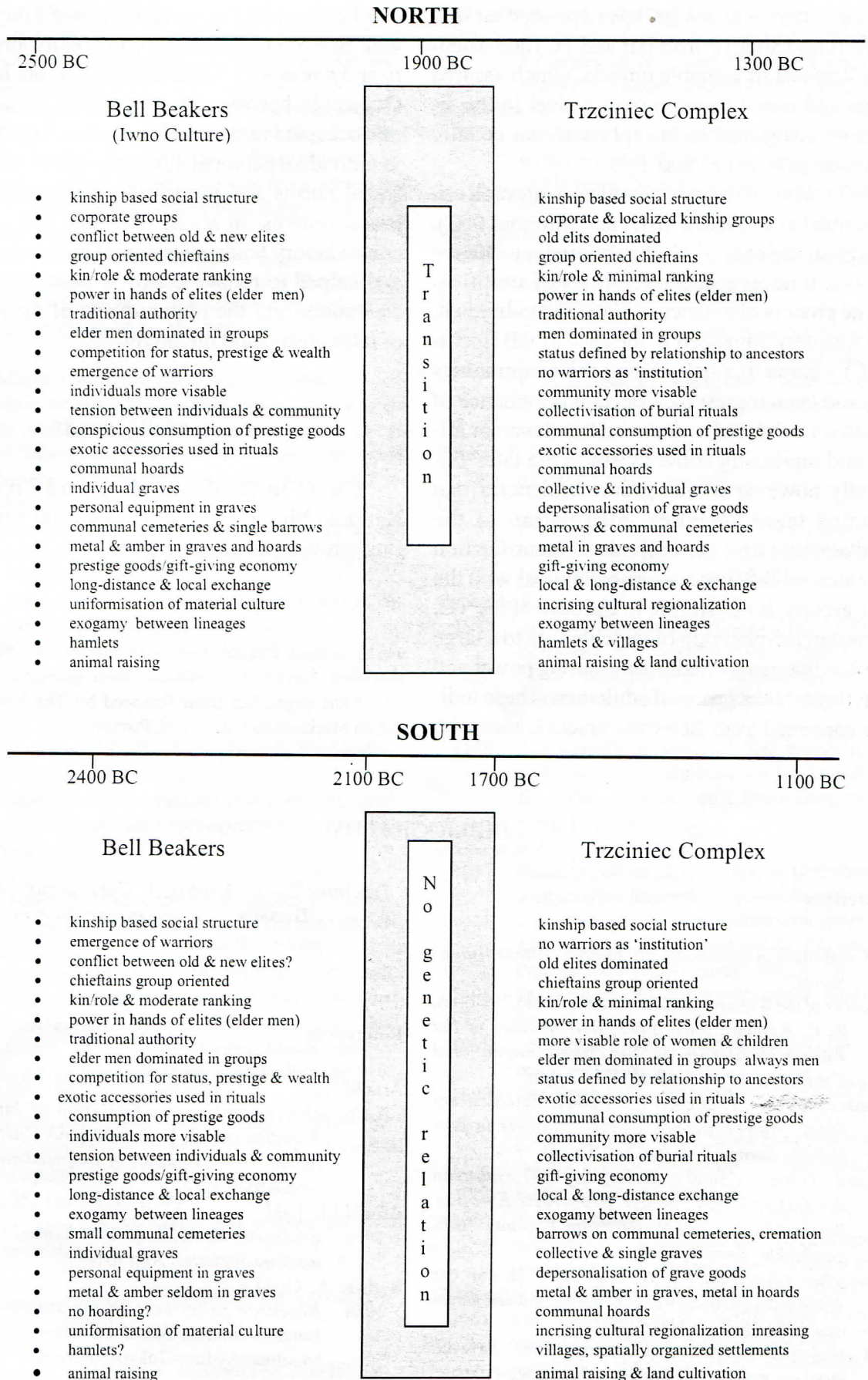


Fig. 13. The characteristics of the Bell Beakers and Trzciniec Complex social structures in North-Eastern Central Europe.

the competition between groups depended on mutual offerings (South Polish BB and TC) and ostentatious disposal of valuable objects, which assured prestige and moral triumph over a rival in the situation of being unable to reply with an equally spectacular gesture (IC and TC).

The ranking of the communities in question can be described as moderate (BB) and minimal (TC). Although in the case of IC it exhibited a tendency to growth, it never reached the level of stratification. The process of emancipation of the individual, which was very advanced in the case of BB (including IC) – came to a halt among the communities of TC, and even regressed. The data is evidence of a processes of deindividualisation, depersonalisation and increasing collectivism in the later TC. Generally however it was group tendencies that dominated these societies, affirmation of the collective rather than the individual. Identification of the elites, which was less problematical with the Beaker groups, is not simple in the case of the TC. It seems that membership of the elite was to a large degree conditioned by traditions assuring power and full privileges to the group of adult men. These individuals appointed from their own ranks a leader, who

can be described as *group-oriented chieftain*, and who first of all carried out community aims (*power to* and *power for*). Chieftainship was not hereditary. One could become a leader thanks to the position one occupied in the kinship system, but also thanks to individual personal attributes which manipulated social norms and modified conservative kinship-based systems. In actual fact these two apparently contradictory tendencies complemented each other and helped to relieve conflicts between individual aspirations and the requirements of the collective, of relationship and hierarchy.

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