

SOURCES

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GRAVE OF THE GLOBULAR AMPHORA CULTURE FROM SITE NO. 27 IN ŚWIERSZCZÓW (PROV. OF ZAMOŚĆ, POLAND)

In the early spring of 1984, the Stanisław Staszic Museum in Hrubieszów was notified about an accidental discovery of a new archaeological site in the area of Świerszczów. Large pieces of pottery that had been delivered to the Museum were identified as fragments of Globular Amphora culture (GAC) pottery. In April of the same year, A. Kokowski and W. Koman, together with a group of UMCS archaeology students, carried out rescue excavation works [Kokowski, Koman 1984:19; 1985:38].

The site was discovered in the eastern portion of the lands belonging to the village of Świerszczów, about 1 km NW of the Hrubieszów — Strzyżów road (Fig. 1). The site is located at the summit of a small hump separating two valleys of small local streams and gently rising about 5 m above their level.

1. GRAVE STRUCTURE

The ceiling part of the site's damaged content was uncovered already at the depth of 0.15 m, directly underneath a thin arable layer of chernozem. Undisturbed soil was reached already 0.30 m below the surface. Due to long ploughing, the grave was seriously damaged. Uncovered under the layer of ploughable soil, the bones were placed non-anatomically in two groups. A certain amount of fine remains was scattered along the SE-NE line for about 3 m (Fig. 2). In the first group (from the west), there were identified cranial bones, ribs, vertebrae and bone fragments of upper extremities. Underneath, the explorers discovered three amber beads and a flint blade. A little further to NW, a discovery of another two amber beads and a large amount of pottery fragments was made. These were remains of two vessels: a vase and a pot. The second group (eastern one) was made up of damaged and moved pelvic bones and bone fragments of lower extremities. Underneath, two

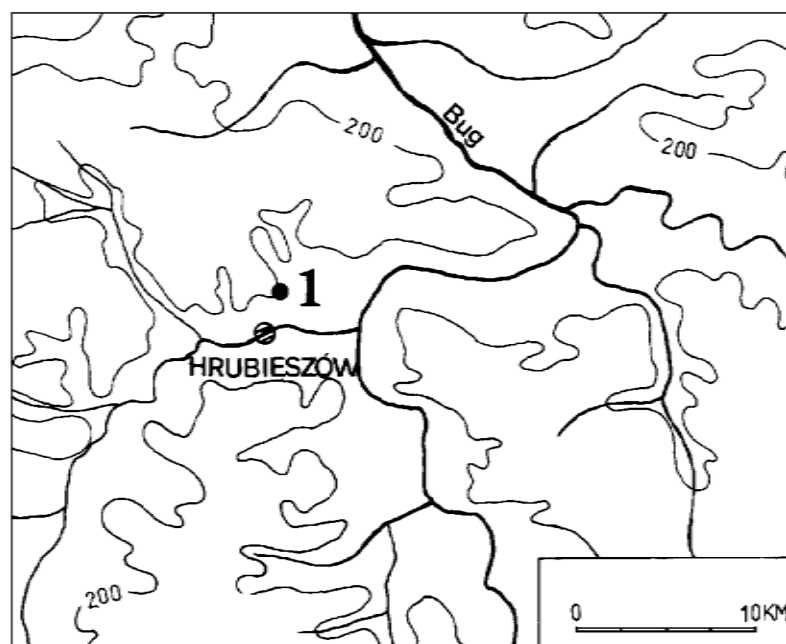


Fig. 1. Location map (1 - Świerszczów site 27)

more amber beads were found. Nearby, NW of the bones, the eighth amber bead discovered in the grave was found. Next to the group, a short distance to E, a discovery of fragments of a small amphora lying closely together and a flint axe was made. In the central portion of the grave, between the bone groups, archaeologists uncovered fragments of another four vessels (Fig. 2).

Due to the fact that the feature was located close to the surface, which caused damage, the outline of the burial pit could not be detected. It seems, however, that it was a flat, ground pit grave without any stone structures since neither in the explored area, nor on the surface in the immediate vicinity of the grave (within a radius of at least 20 m), have any stones, even in the form of small chips, been found. Neither can one definitely conclude how the burial was positioned. Considering the arrangement of the groups of bone remains, it can be assumed that the skeleton was most probably positioned along the NW-SE axis, on its right side with the skull pointing to NW. It must have been buried in a flexed position. It must be also added that the location of vessels in the grave, as shown on the map, has been reconstructed using planigraphy of the ceramic material.

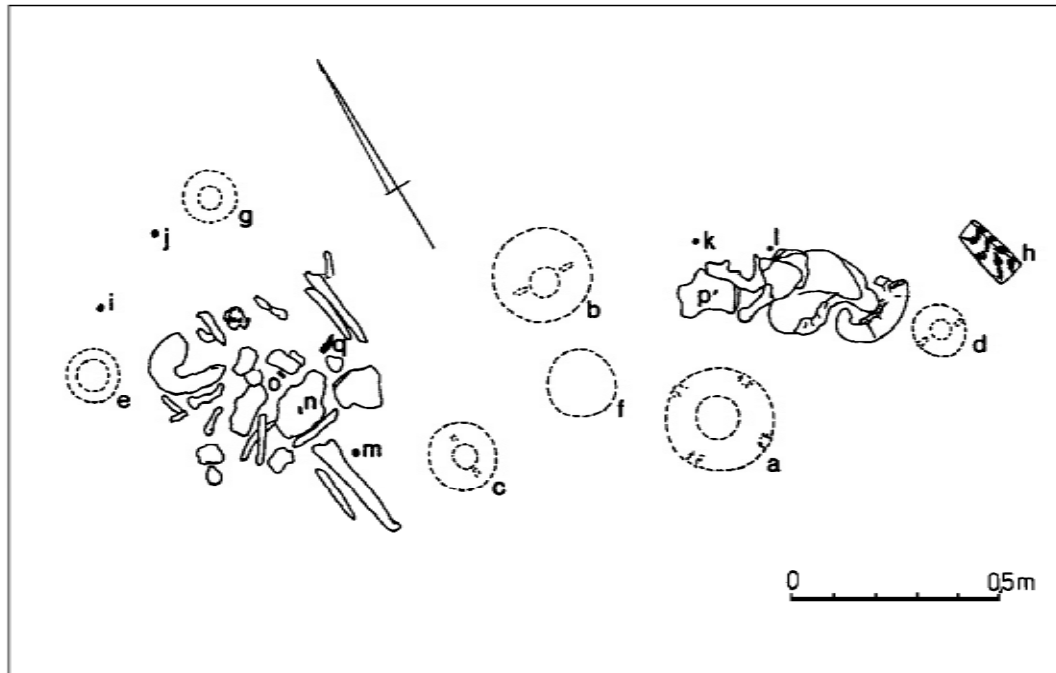


Fig. 2. Świerszczów site 27. Plan of grave at the depth of 0.15- 0.30m (a-q = elements of the grave inventory). Source: Ścibior, Kokowski, Koman 1991

2. DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS

1. A large, wide-opening amphora with a flat bottom, resembling forms of type IIA1 [Wiślański 1966:28-29], viz. Kujawy type amphorae (Fig. 3a). It has four flat handles placed below a clearly marked root of the neck. The neck and the upper part of belly are covered with an ornament of homogeneous vertical patterns and alternately oblique impressions of a rectangular die. Below, there are a double line of impressed cord and vertical cord „loops”. The vessel is made of clay thinned down with a small amount of granite gravel. It has been quite carefully burned. On the outside, it is smooth and light to grey brown while on the inside it is even, greyish-black and black. The fracture of walls (up to 0.8 cm thick) is two-coloured and compact. Dimensions: height (H): 28.0 cm; rim diameter (R_1): 16.0 cm; maximum belly diameter (R_2): 32.0 cm; bottom diameter (R_3): 12.0 cm.

2. A large, two- or four-handled, globular amphora resembling type IA1 [Wiślański 1966:25-26] preserved in fragments (Fig. 3b). The neck — very probably tall and cylindrical — has not survived. On those fragments that have survived no ornament has been found. The amphora is made of clay with a high content of medium and coarse granite gravel. The walls (up to 0.8 cm thick) are smooth, brown and reddish-brown on the outside and greyish-black and black with traces of burnishing

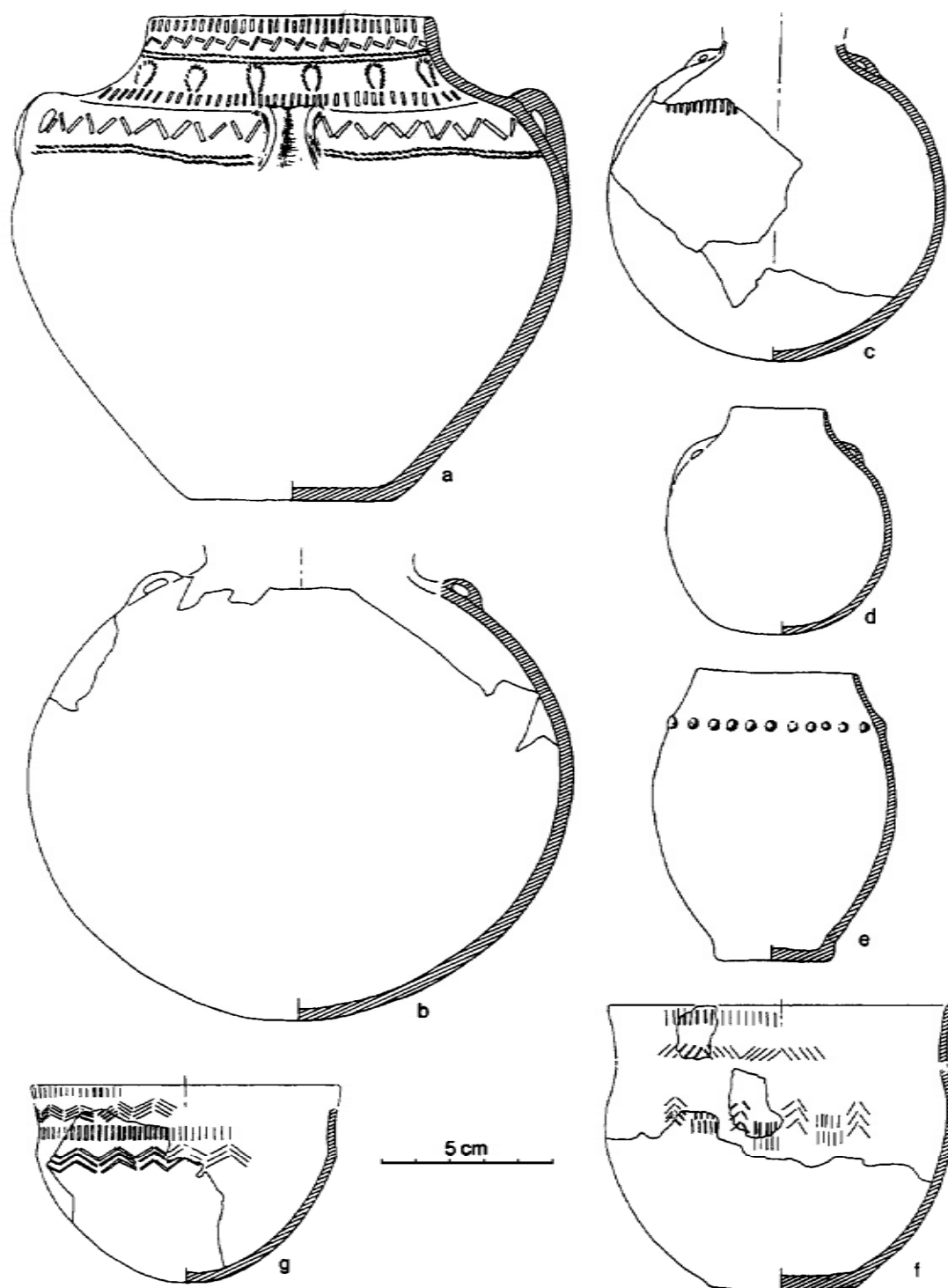


Fig. 3. Świerszczów site 27. Vessels from the grave. Source: Ścibior, Kokowski, Koman 1991

(with a tuft of grass) on the inside. The fracture is stratified with a tendency to separate. Dimensions: preserved H: ca 26 cm; R₂: 32.0 cm.

3. A middle-sized globular amphora, resembling type IA1, only partially preserved. It could have had two or four handles (Fig. 3c). On the upper part of the belly one can see an ornament of vertical impressions of a rectangular die. However, there is not sufficient data to reconstruct the original ornament. The vessel is made of clay thinned down with a large amount of coarse granite gravel whose grains pierce the outer wall surface. The fracture is stratified, rather loose and peels at places. The outer surface, despite smoothing, bears visible traces of light burnishing. It is grey and dark grey. The inner surface and fracture (ca 0.5 cm thick) are brown-grey. Dimensions: preserved H: ca 17 cm; R₂: 20 cm.

4. A small, two-handled amphora without any decoration. An asymmetrical belly is almost globular (Fig. 3d). The neck is short and poorly marked while the rim is clearly thinned. It is an intermediate type between forms IA1 and IA3 [Wiślański 1966:25-27]. It is made of clay with a low content of granite gravel. The surface of walls (0.3 cm thick) is smoothed and grey. Dimensions: H: 13.0 cm; R₁: 5.8 cm; R₂: 13.0 cm.

5. A small „barrel-like” pot (Fig. 3a) with a flat, marked bottom reminding of some forms of types VIIIA2 and VIIIB2 [Wiślański 1966:34]. Under the rim runs a circumferential row of unevenly spaced buttons. In the walls one can observe a large amount of coarse gravel. The outer surface is brown to red-brown, uneven and poorly smoothed, while the inner one is greyish-black and black and bears clear traces of burnishing. The fracture of walls is compact, black and red-brown. Dimensions: H: 16.5 cm; R₁: 9.5 cm; R₂: 14 cm; R₃: 6.3-6.5 cm.

6. A vase of type VB1 [Wiślański 1966:32] preserved in an odd dozen of fragments allowing a graphical reconstruction (Fig. 3f). The upper part of the vessel was covered with an ornament of vertical impressions of a rectangular die and horizontal groups of lines and incisions and similar vertical ones (herringbone), separated by groups of vertical incised lines. The vase is made of clay thinned down with a small amount of fine granite gravel and chamotte. Wall surfaces are even, quite carefully smoothed and red-brown-grey. The fracture is grey-red-brown. Dimensions: H: ca 16 cm; R₁: ca 20 cm; R₂: 20.6 cm; R₃: 8.5 cm.

7. Fragments of a tall bowl with a spherical bottom (Fig. 3g) resembling type IVA3 [Wiślański 1966:31]. The upper part of the vessel was originally covered with an ornament of horizontal patterns of impressions of a rectangular die and multiple, alternately oblique impressions of another die. Made of clay with a large content of coarse and medium-grain gravel, the vase's walls are of uniform dark grey colour (ca 0.4 cm thick) and are relatively well-burned. The outer surface is even and carefully smoothed while the inner one bears traces of burnishing. Dimensions: H: ca 20 cm; R₂: 17.5 cm.

8. A large, tetrahedral axe made of milky-grey chalk Volhynia flint (Fig. 4h) and very carefully smoothed on all sides. The cutting-edge is arched and slightly asymmetrical while the cross-section resembles a rectangle with rounded corners.

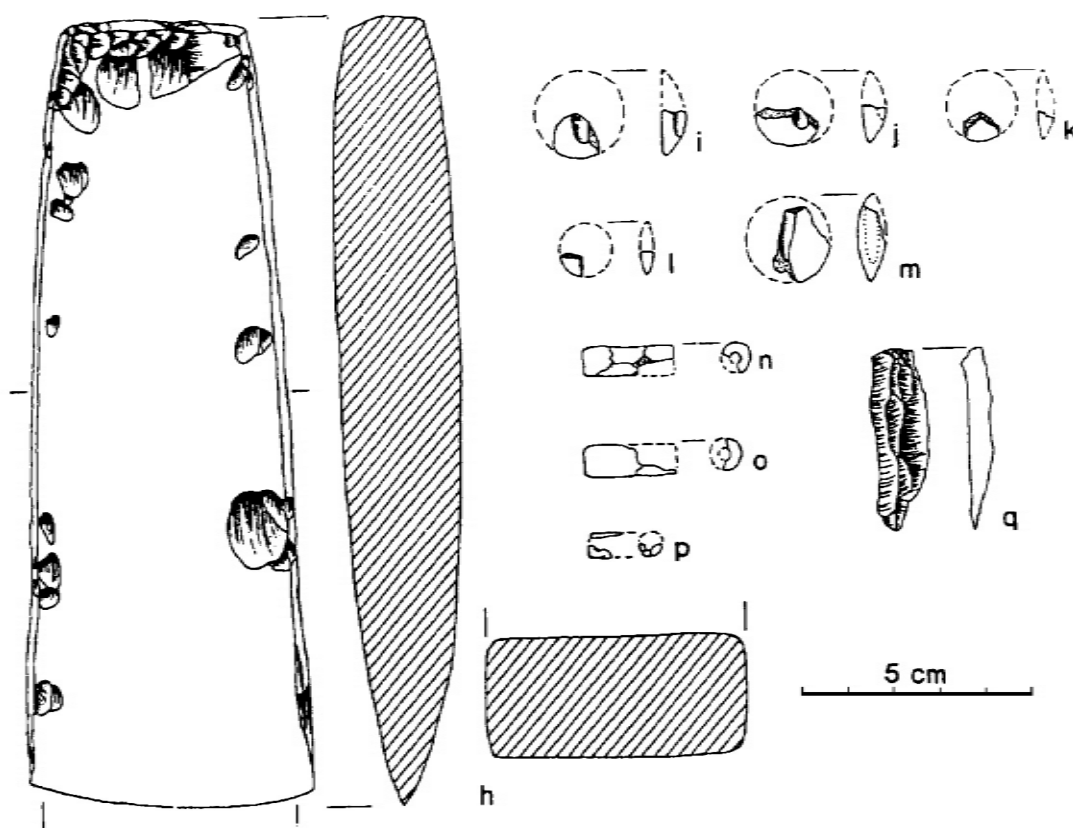


Fig. 4. Świerszczów site 27. Another grave-goods (h - a flint axe, i-p - amber ornaments, q - a flint blade). Source: Ścibior, Kokowski, Koman 1991

Dimensions: length (L): 17.0 cm; width of cutting edge (O): 6.6 cm; dimensions of butt (B): 4.2 x 1.7 cm; maximum thickness (P): 2.6 cm.

9. A fragment of a spherical amber bead (about 1/4 of the artefact). The cross-section is plano-convex with a V-shaped perforation. (Fig. 4i). It is subsumed within type 1BIb according to the division of R.F. Mazurowski [1983: Table I]. Probable diameter (R): ca 18 mm, thickness (P): ca 5 mm.

10. An analogous amber bead which is preserved in about 1/3 of the whole specimen. R : ca 15 mm; P: 5 mm (Fig. 4j).

11. A small fragment, about 1/5, of a similar amber bead; R: ca 15 mm; P: ca 3 mm (Fig. 4k).

12. A chip of a similar amber bead, about 1/5 of the whole specimen; R: ca 12 mm; P: 3 mm (Fig. 4l).

13. A fragment (about 1/2 of the specimen) of a damaged, spherical, amber bead with a perforation along its axis of symmetry (Fig. 4m); R: ca 18mm; P: up to 6 mm.

14. A pipe-like bead. — type 1AIa according to R.F. Mazurowski [1983: Table I] — partially damaged with parts missing or peeled off, and with considerable fracturing of the surface layer (Fig. 4n). Dimensions: length (L): 20 mm; R: 6-8 mm.

15. A pipe-like bead (Fig. 4o), partially damaged with many parts chipped or peeled off; L: 20 mm; R: 8 mm.

16. Tiny bits of a pipe-like bead (Fig. 4p); L: 7 mm; R: ca 5 mm.

17. A blade of chalk Volhynia flint, unretouched (Fig. 4q). Length (L): 40 mm; width (O): 12 mm.

Human bones from the western part of the grave were submitted to the ¹⁴C analysis [see Kadrow, Szmyt, Absolute. . . , in this volume].

Translated by Piotr T. Żebrowski