

# **EASTERN EXODUS OF THE GLOBULAR AMPHORA CULTURE PEOPLE**

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## Editor's Foreword

Globular Amphora culture settlements make one of the most important systems of circulation of cultural patterns in the border zone between the drainage areas of the Baltic and Black Seas. One aspect of this problem, namely the „eastern exodus” mentioned in the title, has seemingly rich historiography. Under closer scrutiny, however, it reveals many intuitive opinions based on weak and insufficiently explored sources. This belief lay behind the present issue of the „Baltic-Pontic Studies”. The papers presented in this issue open new areas of discussion of the problems in question. For the first time, the discussion is set against an incontrovertible scale of absolute chronology. This issue anticipates a broader synthesising presentation to be published in the not too distant future.

## Editorial comment

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

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

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

**Mykola Kryvaltsevich**

## GRAVE OF THE MIDDLE DNEIPER CULTURE FROM PRORVA SITE 1 (GOMEL REGION, BELORUS)

Cemetery Prorva-1 was opened in spring 1993 by Igor Yazepanko in cooperation with Igor Mospan and Aleksader Rykunov. In June 1994 Mykola Kryvaltsevich and Igor Yazepanko made the first reconnaissance excavation of a total area of 45 sq.m.

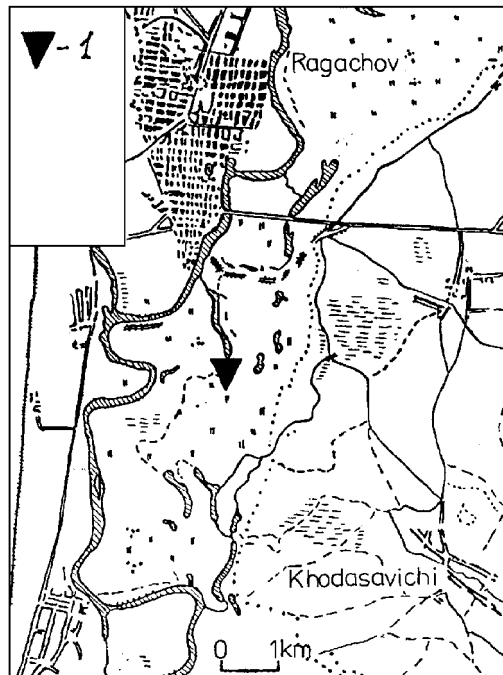


Fig. 1. Location of the Middle Dnieper culture cemetery at Prorva site 1

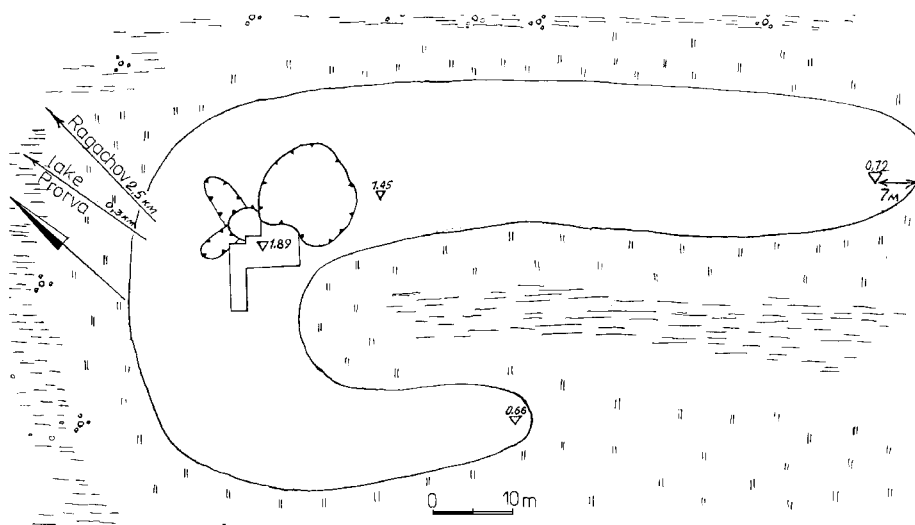


Fig. 2. Prorva site 1. Schematic layout

The monument is located (Fig. 1) in the valley of the left-bank of the Dnieper, about 2.5 km southward from the town Rogachev, on the southern bank of the Prorva lake, on a minor curve up to 1.89 m above the water level. The surface of the curve had been damaged by a minor open pit of about 10 m in diameter and pits (Fig. 2). The northern/north-eastern part of grave 1 together with a vessel and a large flint blade, located *in situ* at the bottom of the burial pit, was found during preliminary works at the sharp edge of the open pit. The whole grave 1 was opened in the course of excavation (Fig. 3), which started along the open pit in the highest part of the curve.

Traces of grave were found 0.67-0.82 m below the contemporary ground level (Fig. 4). The burial pit penetrated the ground more than 0.5 m deeper than the ancient surface and reached 1.34 m from the contemporary ground level. In the upper part, the pit was up to 1.10 m wide; on the subsoil level it narrowed and penetrated the subsoil sharply. Coals of burnt wood were found at the long edges of the narrow part of the pit. The coal remains represented burnt plates which, probably, were used to cover the walls of the grave. Ends of the wooden structures were slightly raised at the south-western edge of the grave (registered at 0.73 m and 0.83 m deeper than the contemporary surface). On the north-western part of the grave, judging from the disposition of the coal-like remains, the plate lay almost horizontally at the bottom of the pit under its sharp edge. Charcoal for radiocarbon analysis was taken from the burnt wooden structures of the grave at the depth of about and over 1 m [see Kadrow, Szmyt, Absolute... , in this volume]. Besides the coal remains in the south-western end of the grave-pit, there were traces of grey-

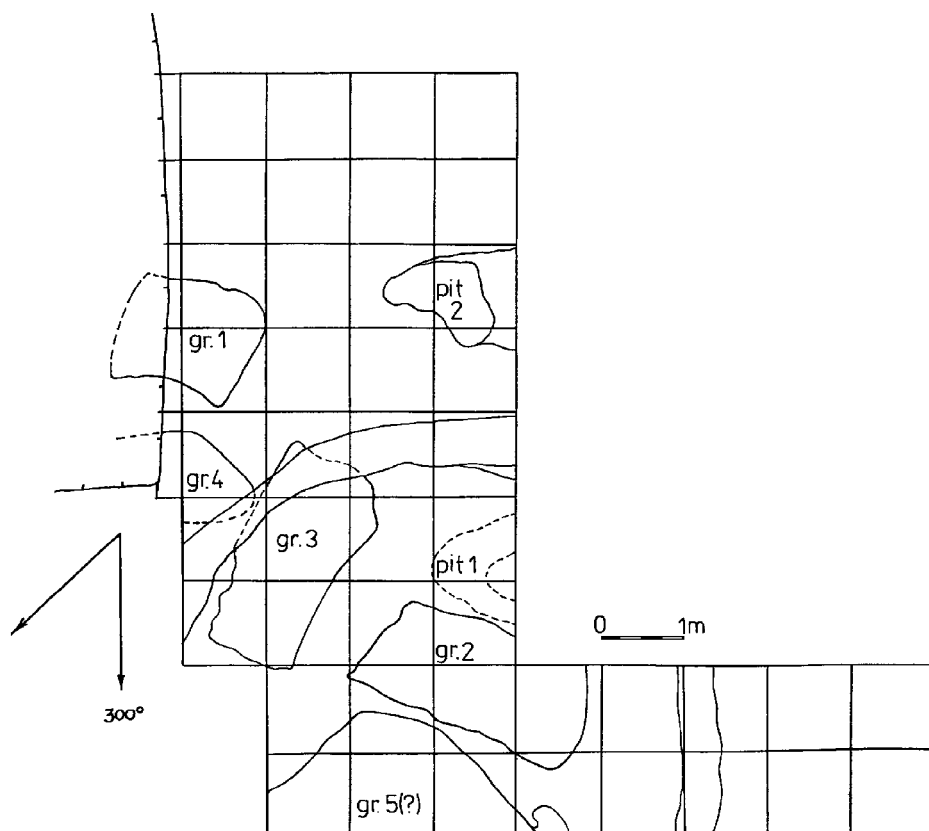


Fig. 3. Prorva site 1. Plan of location of graves and other features in the excavation site of 1994

-black patches (traces of a transversal plate?). Probably the grave was subrectangular in form and oriented along the SW/NE line.

In the upper part, the grave-pit was filled with alternating layers of grey-brown and lighter (light-brown, beige) sand. Below there was a relatively uniform grey-brown filling, which contained rare individual charcoals. The filling displayed several minor pieces of Neolithic ceramics and various fragments of vessels of the Middle Dnieper culture, which most probably had been brought into the pit while it was being filled.

The vessel (Fig. 5:1) from the burial complex was standing bottom up in the northern corner of the grave-pit. In this part of the grave there were patches of dissimilar grey-brown and brown colour with single charcoals. The vessel was filled with sand. It was 13.5 cm high, the diameter of the rim 15-16 cm, the diameter of the bottom 7.6-7.8 cm. The whole perimeter of the bevelled inwards rim is decorated

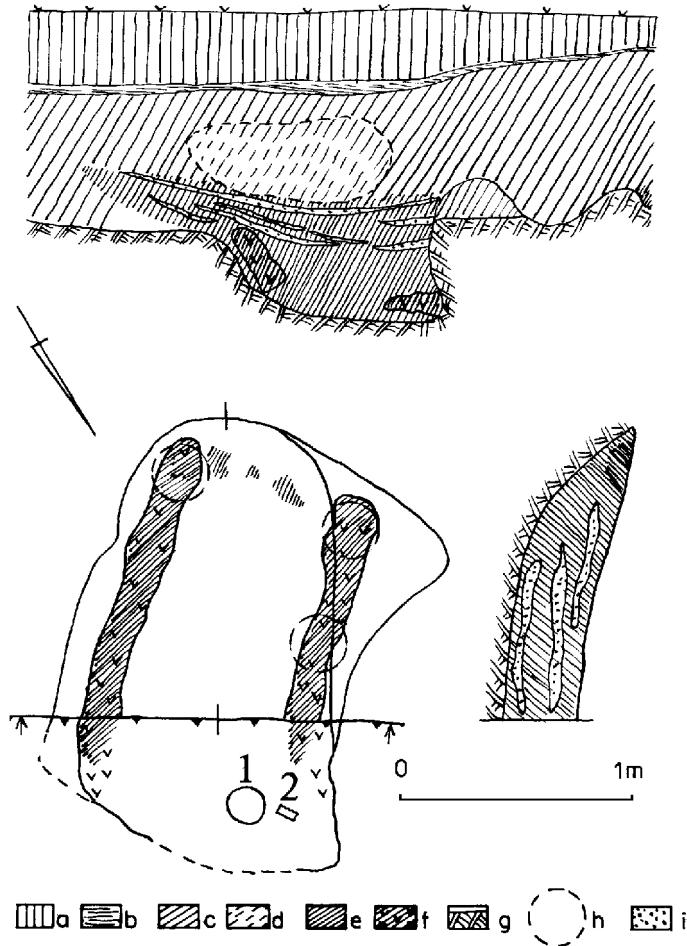


Fig. 4. Prorva site 1. Plan and cross-sections of grave 1 (1- vessel, 2 - flint pinch; a - soil, b - dark-grey soil, c - grey subsoil layer, d - dark-grey humus, e - dark-grey, black humus with charcoals, f - fox den, g - sand, h - places where charcoal samples were taken for radiocarbon analysis, i - subsoil)

with a cord imprint. The outer and the inner surfaces bear traces of retouching. The vessel was decorated with cord ornaments and imprints of a short liners stamp.

A lamellar blade of grey flint was found flat side up, 7 cm away from the vessel, in the direction of 330. Its upper and lower edges bear traces of fine retouching (Fig. 5:2).

Lack of cremated ashes in grave 1 allows us to assume that the ritual probably included the buried body. The skeleton might not be preserved.

In 1994, four more graves were found besides grave 1 in the Prorva site 1.

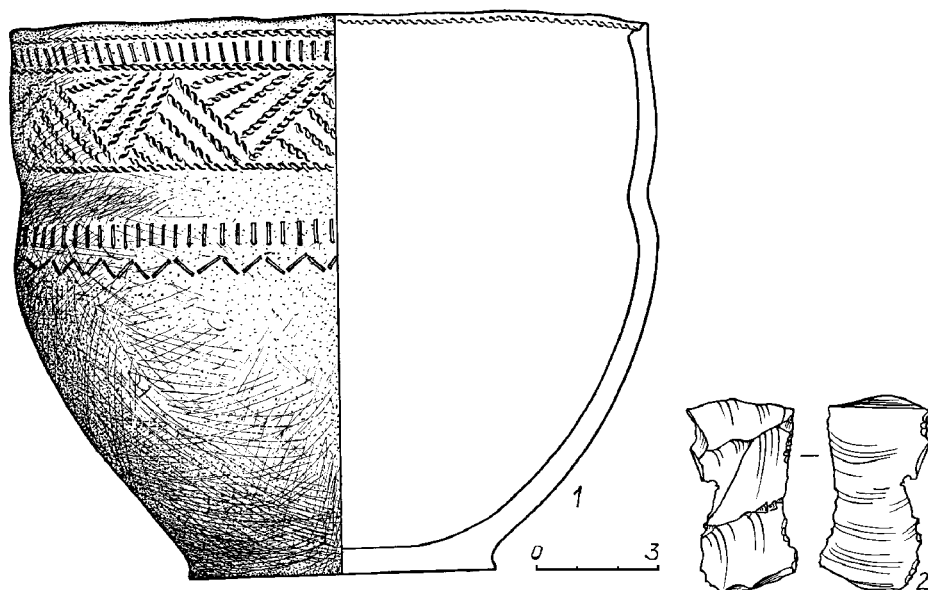


Fig. 5. Prova site 1. Inventory of grave 1

Traces of burnt wooden covers and remains of cremation were recognised in graves 2 and 5 (the latter excavated only partially). Probably, a circular trench was made around graves 2 and 5 in ancient times. Grave 3 displayed traces of cremation. Grave 4 with a standing vessel of the Middle Dnieper culture has been investigated partially.

The vessel from grave 1 is similar to those found in other Middle Dnieper culture graves of the Upper Dnieper region, in particular, in Khodosovichi (ravine Sergeyeva Griva, barrow 1, grave 1; ravine Palik, barrow 1, grave 1), Lipoviy Brod (Siabrovichi) grave 34. Ornament motifs of the vessel are common for vessels of the Middle Dnieper culture.

Meanwhile, the combination in ornament of broken zigzags and vertical imprints of a linear stamp, as well as the shape of the vessel have close similarities to Globular Amphora culture. In particular, vessels of almost identical shape were found in graves of western groups of Globular Amphora culture [e.g. Wiślański 1979:Fig.160,12,13, Fig.164,5] and of eastern group in the Volhynia region [Sveshnikov 1983:Fig. XI,1].

## ABBREVIATIONS

AAC	– Acta Archaeologica Carpathica, Kraków.
AO	– Arkheologicheskiye otkrytiya, Moskva.
BPS	– Baltic-Pontic Studies, Poznań.
JIES	– The Journal of Indo-European Studies, Berkeley.
KSIA	– Kratkiye soobshcheniya Instituta Arkheologii, Moskva.
KSIA AN USSR	– Kratkiye soobshcheniya Instituta Arkheologii AN USSR, Kiev.
MIA	– Materialy i issledovaniya po arkheologii, Moskva.
SA	– Sovetskaya Arkheologia, Moskva.

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