

Agata Wiśniewska

Roman and Migration Period in the so-called Barcka group

Doctoral dissertation prepared under the supervision of: dr hab. Paweł Szymański, prof. UW

Abstract

The subject of the dissertation is a cultural-chronological analysis of the Mazurian-Natangian border area during the Roman and the Migration period, i.e. from the 1st to the 7th century AD. It was at that time a frontier area between the Dollkeim-Kovrovo culture in the north and the Bogaczewo culture, replaced later by the Olsztyn group, in the south. It covers approximately the northern part of the current Mragowo and Kętrzyn County and the adjacent southern edge of the Kaliningrad Region. The main aim of the work is to verify the thesis of C. Engel and W. La Baum in the 1930s about the existence of a separate cultural unit in this place – the so-called "Barcka group".

The paper is divided into nine main chapters. The first four chapters outline the purpose, territorial scope, geographical environment, history of the study and briefly discuss the available collections. In chapter five – Analysis of materials, a cultural-chronological analysis was carried out of all the artefacts known to me from this area, which were divided into - ornaments (brooches, pins, bracelets and necklaces, rings, pendants, beads and others), belt components, tools and utensils, armament, horse row parts and equestrian equipment, Roman imports, ceramics and other objects. In chapter six I discuss the chronology of these finds. The period under discussion is divided into ten main chronological phases I-X covering the period corresponding to phases B1-E3 according to the interregional chronology. Chapter seven is devoted to a discussion of funerary rites. Conclusions resulting from the analysis presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are discussed in chapter eight, which presents the development of settlement in the area of the so-called "Barcka group" in the chronological phases identified earlier and compares it with the development of settlement of the Dollkeim-Kovrovo and Bogaczewska cultures and the Olsztyn group. In chapter nine, the conclusions of the analysis are briefly summarised. The study is accompanied by a catalogue of all the sites and finds known to me from this area (chapter 12).

A cultural-chronological analysis of the area where the cemeteries of the so-called "Barcka group" were to be recorded showed that a separate cultural group never existed here. It lacks elements which could be characteristic only for this area, both in terms of ceramics, isolated artefacts and burial rites.

The rhythm of cultural change during the Roman and Migration period in the territory of the "Barcka group" is consistent with the processes observed in the area of Sambia and Mazuria at that time. On a micro-scale, all the cultural changes visible in the area of Mazuria and Sambia are observed here, starting with the appearance of the Bogaczewska culture first, and later the Dollkeim-Kovrovo culture, through the shift of the Bogaczewska settlement burden to the south and the collapse of the Bogaczewska culture at the end of the Roman period, as well as the appearance of the Olsztyn group and the gradual disappearance of the Dollkeim-Kovrovo culture, together with the expansion of the Sambian population towards the Elbląg Uplands. The cultural changes observed in the cemeteries are, however, probably not related to population exchange, but to the adoption of new (strongest at the time) cultural patterns by the same population.

The only period of relative cultural unification can be seen in the short period of the early phases of the Migration period, between the disappearance of the Bogaczewska culture and the emergence of the Olsztyn group, when all cemeteries existing in this period record objects that can be associated with the Dollkeim-Kovrovo culture. "Barcka group" is therefore more an expression of the state of research in the 1930s than a rendering of the actual cultural divisions.