

# THE SKAISTKALNES SELGAS DOUBLE BURIAL AND THE CORDED WARE/RZUCEWO CULTURE: A MODEL OF THE CULTURE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF BURIAL PRACTICES

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*In late Neolithic the evolution of East Baltic local traditions have experienced essential changes – all-European traditions that were prevalent in Europe took root here. Basing on the materials of Selga (Latvia) double burial, the article analyzes burying customs of the Pamariai culture following the author's cultural model, by examining part of the problems according to migration or autochthonic theories.*

**Keywords:** Graves, the Corded Ware Culture, the Rzucewo Culture, the centre and the periphery, social status, economic models.

*Vėlyvajame neolite Rytų Pabaltijyje įvyko esminių pokyčių vietos tradicijų raidoje – įsigalėjo Europoje vyravusios bendraeuropinės tradicijos. Remiantis Selgos (Latvija) dvigubo kapo medžiaga, straipsnyje analizuojami Pamarių kultūros laidojimo papročiai pagal autoriaus sudarytą kultūros modelį, dalį problemų gvildenant pagal migracijų ar autochtonines teorijas.*

**Reikšminiai žodžiai:** kapai, Virvelinės keramikos kultūra, Pamarių kultūra, centras ir periferija, socialinis statusas, ekonomikos modelis.

## INTRODUCTION: PROBLEMS AND AIMS

The Late Neolithic in the East Baltic marked a turning point in the development of the local Neolithic traditions: in parallel with cultures that had been in existence here for millennia, a *phenomenon* appeared that we know as the Corded Ware/Rzucewo Culture.<sup>1</sup> This new cultural phenomenon, which links together a large part of Europe, marks widely occurring *international traditions*. One of the main areas of study in relation to this phenomenon relates to the interpretation of the causes of the spread of these traditions in a diverse range of cultural and economic settings. Two different positions have emerged, one favouring a theory of migration, the other advocating a theory of autochthonous development (Malmer, 1962, p. 810–815; Kristiansen, 1989; Damm, 1991).

In the East Baltic, right up to the 1980s, all of these processes were interpreted in terms of migration theory. Then there appeared studies in which

data from physical anthropology is cited as evidence in support of the hypothesis of autochthonous development of the Corded Ware Culture (Deņisova, 1987; Lang, 1998), but these are based mostly on theoretical ideas, rather than on detailed analysis of the archaeological material.

What is the Corded Ware Culture: an ethnic or social phenomenon? To what degree is it associated with some definite form of economic activity? What determined the qualitative and quantitative differences in its expression in different areas? What are the relationships with the “*indigenous*” cultures? There is no agreement on these matters.

The international style in the Corded Ware Culture has several different expressions: the pottery forms and decoration, the widely encountered artefact form known as the battle axe, and the burial practices. It is the last of these aspects that will be considered in the present paper: the focus here is on the analysis of the burials of this culture.

<sup>1</sup> The term “*Corded Ware/Rzucewo Culture*” is used because there is no agreement among researchers regarding the cultural groups that existed in the south-eastern and eastern Baltic. The author's views on this issue are set out in the present paper.

Compared with the preceding phase of the Neolithic, burials from the Late Neolithic, especially Corded Ware Culture burials, are quite numerous. However, because the burials of this culture occur singly or in small groups, they often tend to be destroyed in the very process of discovery. Accordingly, it is in many cases only the artefacts themselves, separated from their burial context, that are available for study, something that reduces the analytical and interpretive possibilities, and the credibility of the results obtained.

One such site is the double burial discovered in the course of building work in 1994 at Selgas in Skaistkalne Parish, Latvia. In terms of the rich inventory of artefacts and pottery, this is undoubtedly one of the most striking burials of this culture, but at the same time there are many aspects that are not clear. In order to obtain a fuller picture of the burial itself and its setting, excavation was undertaken in the immediate surrounding area, the aim of which was not only to obtain additional information, but also to investigate various theoretical possibilities. These possibilities relate to three basic questions:

- 1) Is the double burial the only burial at this site?
- 2) Were there any specially built grave structures?
- 3) Was this a barrow burial?

The results of the excavation, which were essentially negative, suggested a rethinking of the distribution in the East Baltic of burial practices whose presence has been suggested, but not confirmed, and of the connection between the Selgas burial and the Rzucewo Culture, since, as is known, various researchers view this culture as restricted to the Baltic coast, whereas the find discussed here lies inland. The evidence from the Selgas burial has also directly motivated further consideration of a whole series of other problems relating to Late Neolithic society and economy, and to the encounter between the old “*indigenous*” and the new “*international*” traditions. All of these issues are treated within the frame of a

cultural model developed by the author, considering them in the light of the migration and autochthonous development theories.

### I. THE SELGAS BURIAL: DISCOVERIES AND EXPECTATIONS

The burial analysed in the present paper lies at the south-eastern margin of the Zemgale Plain, about 100 m from the right bank of the River Mēmele, in the upper part of the river valley, which is not subject to flooding. Thus, there is a clear connection with the river (Fig. 1:7). The burial was discovered by Dz. Kalniņš when digging the foundation pit for a new building. He cleaned the skeleton and the artefacts, drew and removed them. Thus, the main source of information concerning the body position and the location of the artefacts is the drawing made by the finder. The layout of the excavation areas of 1994 and 2004 (48 m<sup>2</sup>) was determined by the aims of the excavation, and by the limits of the area where excavation was actually possible.

The relief in the excavated area has been altered in the course of recent activities, and does not entirely correspond to the situation in the Late Neolithic. The stratigraphy in the area surrounding the burial was uniform, affected in places by recent disturbance: 1) there was a surface layer of dark garden soil of varying thickness, 2) this was followed by geological layers, consisting of gravel and red-brown loam, 3) below this was a geological layer of red clay.

The grave for a woman aged about 40–45 years and a child of about 1–1½ years<sup>2</sup> had been dug into the clay layer to a depth of 0.80–0.90 m (Fig. 2).<sup>3</sup> The upper part of the female skeleton was disturbed and fragmentary, and the skull had been shifted from its original position. The woman had been laid in a supine position, with the legs flexed on the right, while the position of the arms is indeterminable. The

<sup>2</sup> Determined by anthropologist Dr. G. Gerhards (Institute of Latvian History at the University of Latvia). In earlier publications (Grasis, 1996, p. 63; Gerhards, 2003, 2. tab.) the biological age of the female was given as 35–40, but reassessment of the anthropological material suggests that this individual was actually older than originally thought.

<sup>3</sup> The depth is calculated by considering the level of the bottom of the grave in relation to the present-day ground surface. The level of the surface may have been different in antiquity.

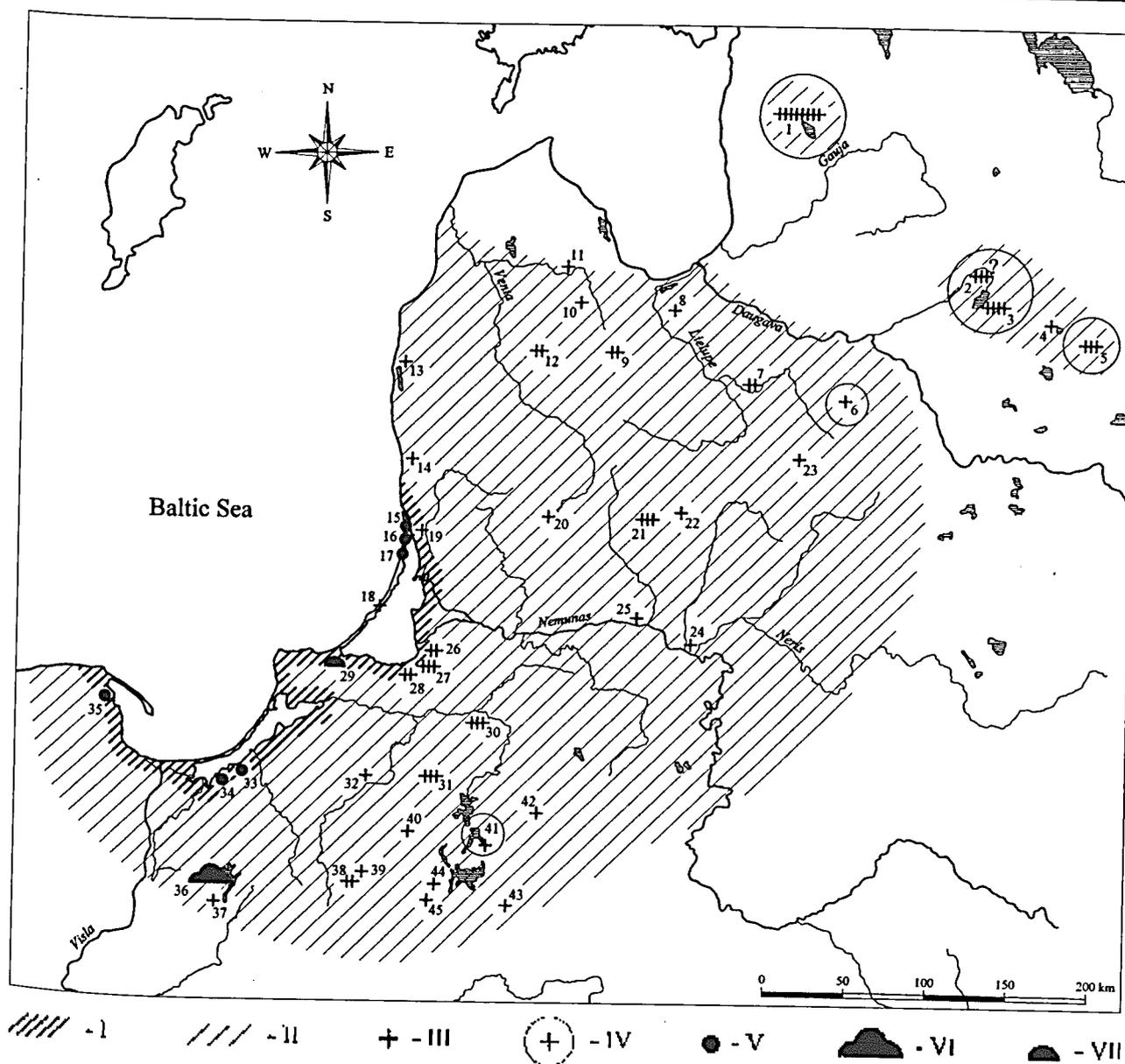


Fig. 1. Rzučewo Culture burials: I – central area of the culture; II – periphery of the culture; III – single burials and groups of burials; IV – burials in areas around lakes populated by hunter-fisher-gatherers; V – burials on Rzučewo Culture settlement sites; VI – group of barrows; VII – barrow (For explication, see note to the text no.19). Drawing by N. Grasis.

Find locations: 1 – Zvejnieki; 2 – Abora I; 3 – Kvāpāni II; 4 – Sarkaņi; 5 – Kreiči; 6 – Krīgāni; 7 – Selgas; 8 – Aizupe; 9 – Bāļas; 10 – Tāmas; 11 – Kandava; 12 – Grīnerti; 13 – Atkalņi; 14 – Kurmaičiai; 15 – Meškos galva; 16 – Alksnynė; 17 – Juodkrantė; 18 – Rasytė; 19 – Lankupiai; 20 – Spiginas; 21 – Plinkaigalis; 22 – Grinkiškis; 23 – Gyvakarai; 24 – Veršvai; 25 – Paštuva; 26 – Hohenbruch; 27 – Eiche; 28 – Erlenwald; 29 – Kaup; 30 – Erdmannsruh; 31 – Bieberstein; 32 – Damerau; 33 – Tolkemit; 34 – Succase; 35 – Rzučewo; 36 – Kl. Babenz (*Babiety Male*); 37 – Karrasch; 38 – Ząbie; 39 – Nerwig; 40 – Skatnick; 41 – Dudka; 42 – Stosnau; 43 – Siegenau; 44 – Kalgienen; 45 – Waldersee.

burial was oriented with the head to the NW, and the face towards the SW.<sup>4</sup> The child had been buried at the woman's feet. Unfortunately, only separate bones of the child remained, so the body position and orientation cannot be determined.

The double burial stands out in terms of its particularly rich grave inventory,<sup>5</sup> but the position of a whole series of finds in relation to the burial is unknown. Found on the right side, a little way from the skeleton, was a blue-grey flint knife (Fig. 4). A shell, identified as *Glycymeris sp.*,<sup>6</sup> is thought to have been found in the region of the chest. At the feet of the burial was a group of objects: a bone chisel, part of an antler and two unworked bones; a little distance from this group there were two bone awls. The wear on the middle part of the blade of the chisel and the evidence of use might indicate that it was also used as a "scraper". The largest of the unworked bones has a part split away at one end, but it is hard to say whether this was done in antiquity for some special purpose, or whether the bone was broken later. This material comes from wild animals: the bones and bone artefacts are roe deer, while the antler is red deer (Table 1).<sup>7</sup>

The pottery found near the burial comes from six different vessels,<sup>8</sup> but only the location of one of these vessels in relation to the burial has been recorded. Thus, a large amphora had been placed by the woman's right side, about 0.30 m from the shoulders. Sherds of other vessels were identified among the sherds of the amphora, as well as in the excavated areas and in the excavated earth. All the potsherds from the excavated areas derived from the soil layer and generally are indicative of the character of the disturbance, rather than informing about burial practices (Fig. 3). The number of sherds per vessel shows a great deal of variation (Table 2).

Best preserved was the amphora, and the sherds recovered from this vessel permit fairly precise reconstruction of the form and decoration (Fig. 5:1). This is a rounded vessel, about 40–45 cm in diameter, with fairly thin walls, ranging in thickness from 0.6 cm in the lower body to 1.3 cm in the upper, decorated part of the body. Although there is a practice of reconstructing vessels of a similar type as having handles at the sides (Loze, 1996, fig. 4:2; 2003, 2. att.: 3), this particular vessel was without handles. The upper body of the amphora is entirely covered

Table 1. Animal species determination of the bones and bone artefacts from Selgas.

Object	Skeletal part	Species	Figure
Bone awl	Metacarpus	Roe deer ( <i>Capreolus capreolus L.</i> )	Fig. 4:3
Bone awl	Tibia	Roe deer ( <i>Capreolus capreolus L.</i> )	Fig. 4:4
Antler	–	Red deer ( <i>Cervus elaphus L.</i> )	Fig. 4:5
Unworked bone	Metacarpus	Roe deer ( <i>Capreolus capreolus L.</i> )	Fig. 4:7
Unworked bone	Tibia	Roe deer ( <i>Capreolus capreolus L.</i> )	Fig. 4:8

<sup>4</sup> The orientation was determined on the basis of the orientation of the spinal column and information from Dz. Kalniņš.

<sup>5</sup> The collection is kept at the National History Museum of Latvia, Accession No. VI 313: 1–33, A 13369: 1–10.

<sup>6</sup> Determined by D. Pilāte (Specialist, Natural History Museum of Latvia). This is a species of marine mollusc that does not inhabit the Baltic Sea at the present day. The idea that the shell came from the region of the chest is partly an assumption, since it is based on information from Dz. Kalniņš: the earth in which the shell was found was removed from this part of the skeleton.

<sup>7</sup> Determined by Dr. L. Daugnora (Lithuanian Veterinary Academy).

<sup>8</sup> The author is most grateful to pottery expert B. Dumpe, Specialist of the National History Museum of Latvia, for advice regarding the determination and grouping of the pottery. In a previous publication (Grasis, 1996, 63. p.) not all the pottery is described.

Table 2. The pottery from Selgas and the forms of vessels.

Vessel form	Decoration	No. of sherds	Position/find circumstances	Figure
Amphora	Incised lines	119	By the burial; in the excavated area; in the excavated earth	Fig. 5:1
Beaker	Cord impressions	10	Among the sherds of the amphora; in the excavated earth	Fig. 5:2
Beaker	Herringbone design	3	—, —, —	Fig. 5:3
Pot	Cord impressions	5	—, —, —	Fig. 5:4
Pot (?)	Herringbone design	8	—, —, —	Fig. 5:5
Pot (?)	Collar, pits	1	In the excavated area	Fig. 5:6
Indeterminate	—	7	—	—

in ornamentation, which reaches to the middle of the vessel, terminating in two parallel lines. The basic composition consists of six bands of radial lines, separated by patterns of hatched triangles. The triangles are not uniformly arranged across the whole of the decorated surface, but do conform to overall design principles. The design has been executed using a sharp instrument: probably a flint tool. There are a conspicuously small number of sherds from the base of the amphora, suggesting that it may not have been placed in the grave in an intact state.

Because there are only small numbers of sherds from the other vessels – two beakers and probably two pots – the form of the vessels and the placement of the decoration can be reconstructed only approximately (Fig. 5:2–5). Another vessel, possibly a pot with a collar, is represented by fragmentary rim sherd (Fig. 5:6). There are some differences observable in terms of the fabric of the different vessels, which has inclusions of fine crushed rock and grog.<sup>9</sup>

The large number of vessels, along with four flint flakes recovered here, suggested that there might have been a Corded Ware Culture settlement site at this spot, too, with a weakly expressed cultural layer.

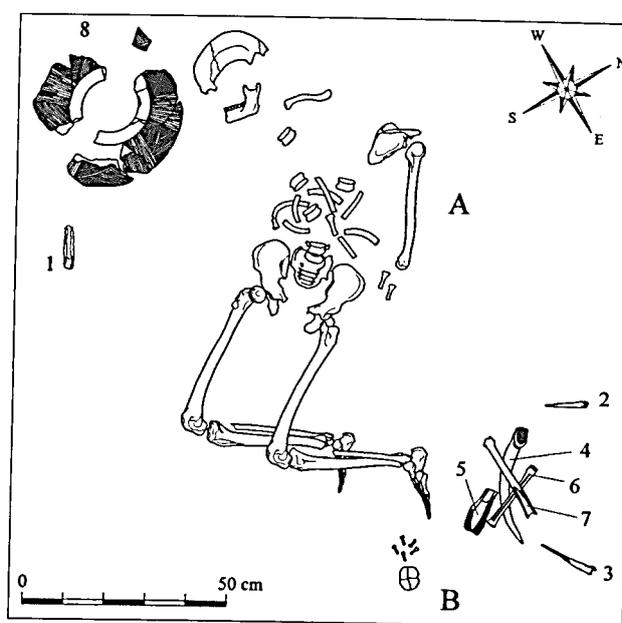


Fig. 2. Plan of the double burial at Selgas, showing the placement of the artefacts: A – female burial, B – child burial; 1 – flint knife; 2, 3 – bone awls; 4 – antler; 5 – bone chisel; 6, 7 – unworked bone; 8 – amphora. Drawing by N. Grasis after a sketch by Dz. Kalniņš.

However, there is no foundation for this idea, since virtually all the pottery was found in the vicinity of the burial.

<sup>9</sup> The fabric composition of the vessels, in the same numerical order as in Fig. 5, may be characterised as follows: 1, 6 = clay + grog + crushed rock + organic matter; 2, 3, 4 = clay + grog + sand + organic matter; 5 = clay + sand. The rock and grog were finely ground. The sand and the small amount of organic matter observed most likely reflect not the technology of fabric preparation, but rather the conditions in which the fabric was prepared, namely, that it was prepared directly on the ground, rather than on some special surface.

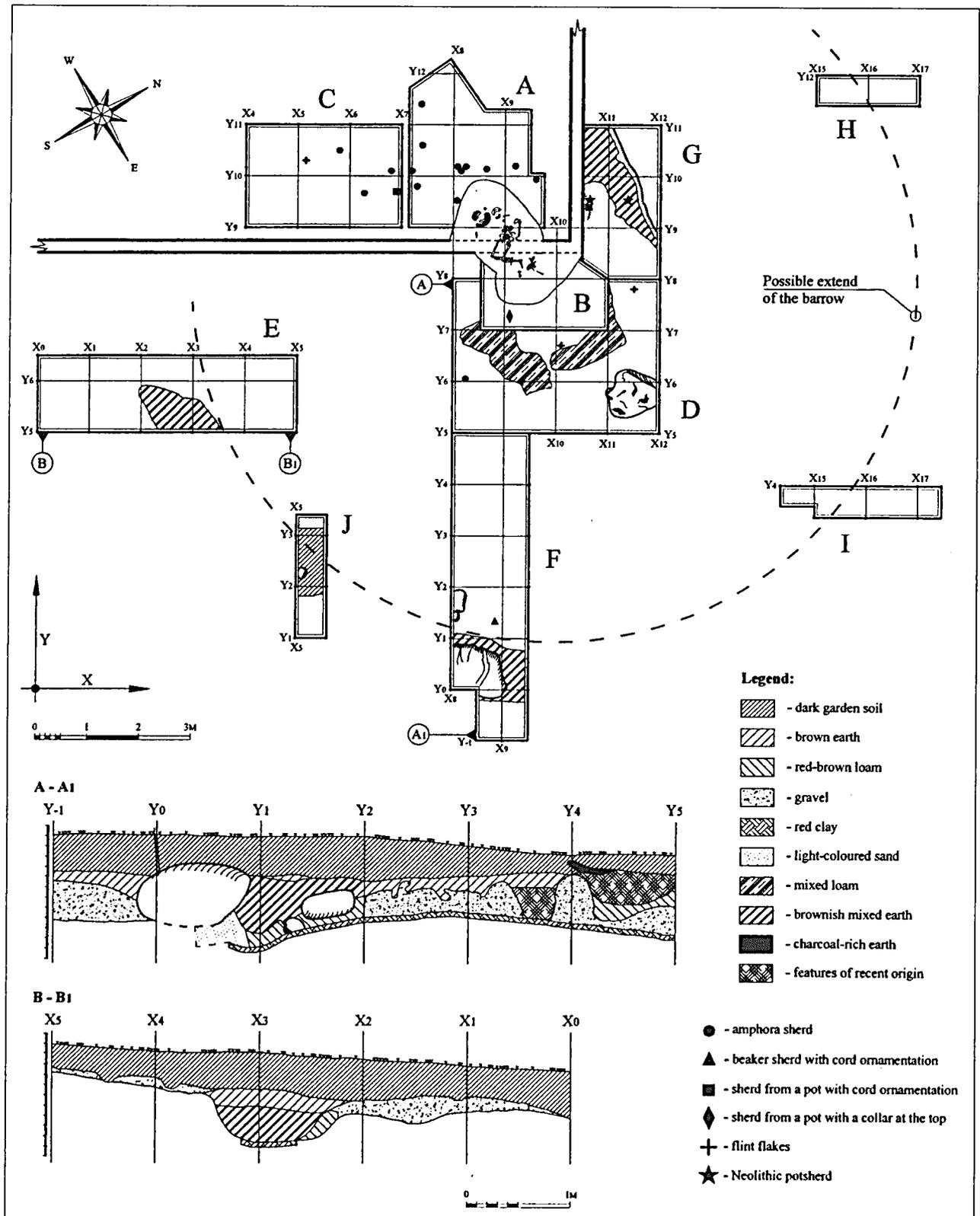


Fig. 3. Excavated areas at Selgas, showing the features, sections and find locations. *Drawing by N. Grasis.*

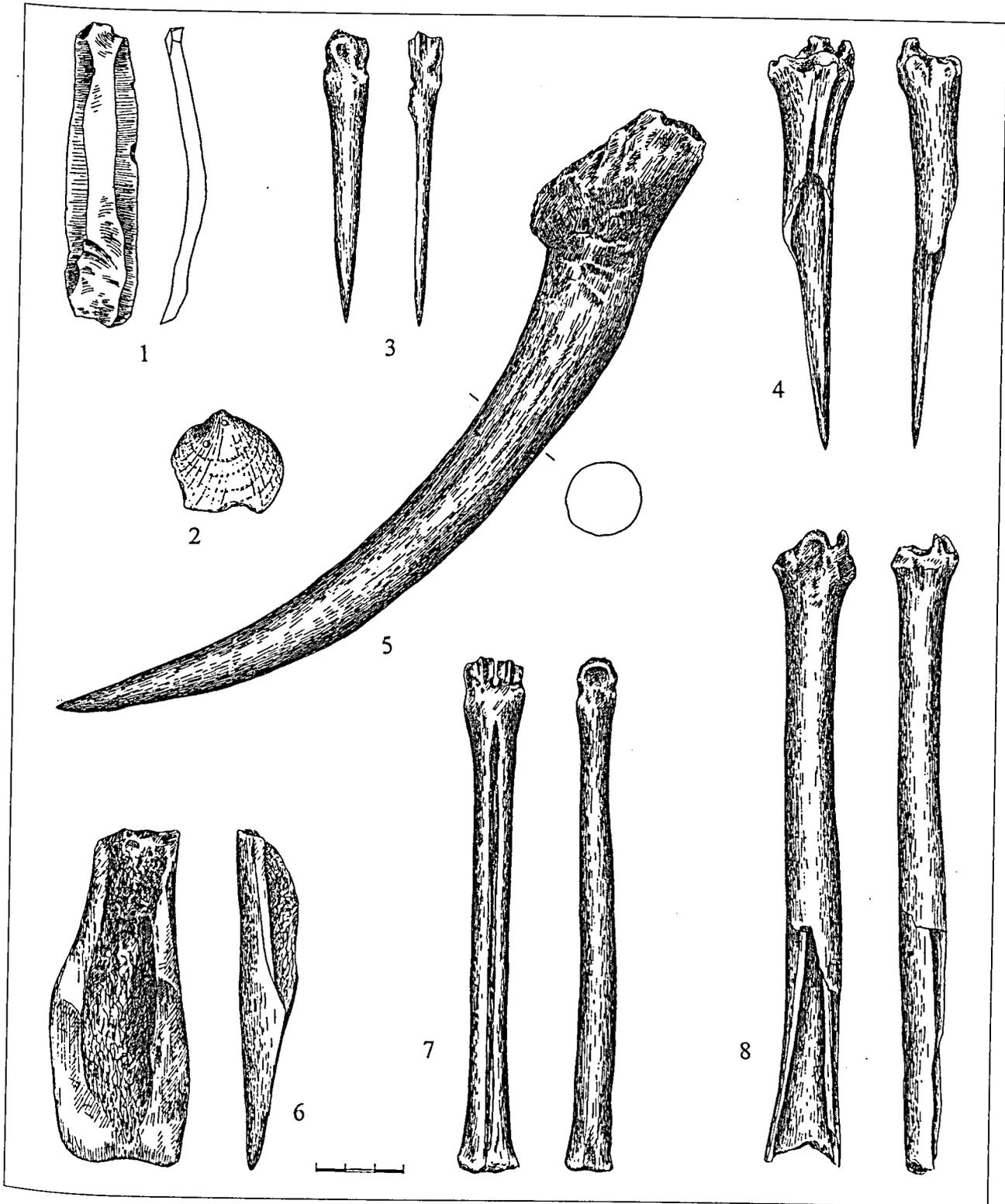


Fig. 4. Inventory of the Selgas double burial: 1 – flint knife; 2 – shell; 3, 4 – bone awls; 5 – antler; 6 – bone chisel; 7, 8 – unworked bone. Drawing by Dž. Zemīte.

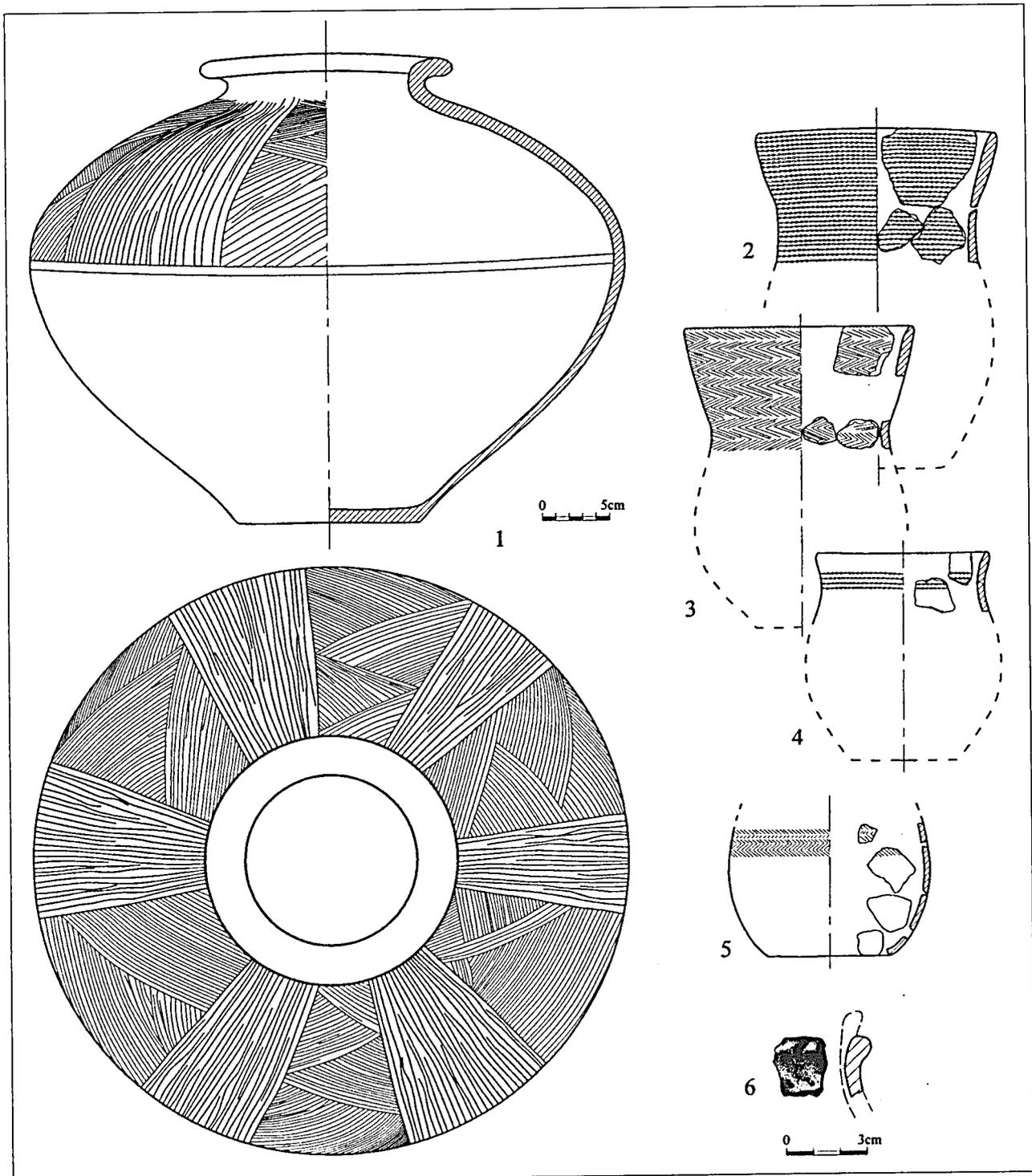


Fig. 5. Reconstructed forms and decoration of the vessels from Selgas: 1 – amphora; 2, 3 – beakers; 4–6 – pots (Note: drawings 2–5 show only those sherds utilised in the vessel reconstructions; for further details, see Table 2). Drawing by N. Grasis.

An attempt was made to identify features in the earth surrounding the burial that might provide evidence of burial structures. Along the northern and eastern edges, at an average depth of 0.60–0.70 m, at the surface of the geological gravel and loam, zones of mixed earth were observed, seemingly indicating the former existence of a rectangular “structure” surrounding the burial (Fig. 3:G, D). The zones of mixed earth were observable only in certain of the excavated areas around the burial, and are not homogeneous in terms of their character. The regular arrangement of these, and the absence of recent material in the fill, are not sufficient arguments for regarding these as the remains of a burial structure.

Sections of ditches were found in some of the excavated areas and trial trenches, providing some indirect evidence of the presence of a barrow. Ditches 1.0–1.20 m wide and 0.50 m deep were found in two places, suggesting a possible barrow with a diameter of about 14 m (Fig. 3:E, F). This corresponds to the size of the barrows known in the south-eastern Baltic and in the Upper Vistula area in Poland (Heydeck, 1893, p. 47; Engel, 1935, Taf. 54:A; Kilian, 1955, Fundliste II, Nr. 24, 27; Włodarczak, 2000, Table 1). However, no confirmation was obtained of this idea in the course of excavation at other possible locations of ditches (Fig. 3:J and H, I). The stones observed along the inner margin of the ditch are of geological origin (Fig. 3:F), and the stratigraphy observed in the sections does not provide indications of a mound.

Based on the information obtained so far, it may be thought that the double burial at Selgas can be classed among single graves, and relates to the middle phase in the existence of the Rzucewo Culture (Table 5), with echoes of the so-called A Horizon. In spite of the various aspects that remain unclear, it is evident that the above-described artefacts and pottery relate to the double burial. It is hard to explain the large number of vessels, which, apart from the

amphora, are represented by separate sherds. It remains unclear to what degree this reflects the preservation conditions, and to what degree it relates to Late Neolithic burial practices. The presence of a grave structure and barrow are only theoretical possibilities, and remains unproven.

## II. THE CORDED WARE/RZUCEWO CULTURE: THE TERRITORY AND MODEL

How does the above-described burial fit into the context of the other finds from this region? Is it an individual case, or part of a pattern? In order to answer these questions, certain basic concepts first need to be formulated. In the first place, we need to consider the situation regarding archaeological cultures in the Late Neolithic in this region. Secondly, it is necessary to determine the boundaries of the cultural region in which analogies and patterns may be sought.

### One culture or several?

The appearance in the East Baltic of the Corded Ware/Rzucewo Culture marks the beginning of the Late Neolithic. It spread in part of the territory previously occupied by the Zedmar, Nemunas and Narva Cultures. Along the Baltic coast, the new traditions became dominant, while in inland areas a multicultural milieu developed, where the indigenous and new traditions existed in parallel, something that is reflected in the archaeological material in the presence of *unmixed* and *mixed* settlement assemblages.<sup>10</sup> A general tendency can be observed, where the new cultural tradition, that of the Corded Ware Culture, had an influence on the local cultures, while the opposite process is not observed.

In terms of qualitative and quantitative distribution of the material, two contrasting areas can be distinguished: a *coastal* area and an *inland* area. This difference has, in the history of research on this topic,

<sup>10</sup> The *unmixed assemblages* are taken to include those Late Neolithic settlements that have exclusively material characteristic of the Corded Ware/Rzucewo Culture. Short-term settlements are in many cases difficult to distinguish, since it is not clear from the publications whether in these cases it is possible to speak of a separate chronological layer. The term *mixed assemblages* includes all those settlements of all the indigenous cultures that have only a small number of Corded Ware/Rzucewo Culture finds – mostly potsherds (c.f. Grasis, 2002, 61–62. p.).

formed the basis for the distinction of two Corded Ware Culture groups. Traditionally, one section of researchers understand the term *Rzucewo Culture* (=Haffküstenkultur or Pamarių Culture) as applying to a narrow coastal belt along the Baltic Sea (Tetzlaff, 1970, p. 356, fig. 123; Machnik, 1981, p. 192–193, Abb. 1), while the inland area is ascribed to the *East Baltic Corded Ware and Battle Axe Culture* (Šturms, 1970, p. 186; Brazaitis, 2005, p. 234–235, pav. 67, 68). However, another group of researchers consider that these two areas can be united: they distinguish the Rzucewo Culture in the coastal area, and regard the inland area as its zone of influence (Kilian, 1955, p. 165–177; Rimantienė, 1996, p. 241–242, pav. 158).

Since the concept of an archaeological culture is itself quite relative, open to a wide range of interpretations and criteria for identification, precise boundaries are impossible to lay down. Since interpretation of the settlement material is a very complex matter, it is the distribution of stray finds of battle axes that serves as one of the main criteria for determining the extent of the cultural region<sup>11</sup>. A second criterion is the trend of regional development observable during the period that followed – the Early Bronze Age.<sup>12</sup> On this basis, we may say that at the end of the Neolithic and the beginning of the Bronze Age, the area from East Pomerania to the Daugava can be regarded as a united cultural region (Kilian, 1955, p. 177). Regardless of the differences in the character of the material between the coastal and inland area, the present author considers that the whole of the cultural region as defined here can be brought together under a single term – the *Rzucewo Culture* – and this forms the basis for the analysis of settlements, burials and cultures.

The territory of Estonia belongs to a different cultural region (Jaani, 1971, p. 47, 49, Abb. 1, 9),

and thus the material from this area cannot be used for direct comparison in analysing the Rzucewo Culture. Somewhat unclear is the question of whether the cultural region should be regarded as including northern and eastern Latvia, where finds relating to the Corded Ware Culture are mainly distributed along the banks of lakes that were inhabited by hunter-fisher-gatherers. However, the character of these finds here serves to link this area more with the Rzucewo Culture region.

### A model of the Rzucewo Culture

Is it possible to derive in this specific cultural region an overall scheme for interpreting prehistoric developments? In analysing the diverse material from Late Neolithic settlements with Corded Ware in terms of the duration of occupation and the relative proportions of different kinds of pottery, several different kinds of assemblages can be distinguished. Of these, two are characteristic of the Rzucewo Culture: *unmixed assemblages representing long-term habitations* and *unmixed assemblages representing short-term habitations*. The mixed assemblages all represent long-term habitations and reflect the infiltration of the new international traditions into the material of the indigenous cultures. The kinds of settlement assemblages distinguished here, with minor exceptions, show a definite pattern of spatial distribution. The unmixed assemblages from long-term habitations are located in the coastal zone, while the short-term and mixed assemblages occur in the inland area (Grasis, 2002, 63.–69. p. 1, 3. att.).

In all cases, the research on pottery in the inland areas has led to the identification of analogies with the coastal area (Ванкина, 1980, с. 57; Grinevičiūtė, 2000, p. 119), which represents the only possible

<sup>11</sup> The term “cultural region” partly corresponds to the concept of an “archaeological culture”, but in this case it encompasses the area in which Rzucewo Culture elements occur as the result of processes of migration or exchange, and where in many cases they were not dominant.

<sup>12</sup> The correspondence between the cultural regions of the Late Neolithic Corded Ware/Rzucewo Culture and those of the Early Bronze Age has come to the attention of many researchers (e.g., Kilian, 1955, p. 178–189, Karte 11–13), however this fact has been considered mainly from the aspect of cultural continuity and the formation of the Balts. The present author regards this correlation more as an indicator of similarities in terms of the distance of social connections and in terms of regional centralisation.

Table 3. The contrast within the Rzucewo Culture in its classic phase.\*  
(after Grasis, 2002, 4. tab. with additions).

Coast	Inland
Long-term habitation	Short-term habitation
Larger settlements	Smaller settlements
Substantial post-built structures	Simple, light structures
Stone-lined hearths	Earthen hearths
A sedentary way of life with seasonal settlements	A "mobile" way of life
Burials on settlement sites	Single burials and groups of burials
Considerable diversity of pottery forms and decoration	Less diversity of pottery forms and decoration
Settlements and economic activities connected with the sea	Settlements mainly located near rivers
Hunter-fisher-gatherers, with indications of food production	?

\* Some exceptions are known.

source of this new tradition, whether it spread by migration or by autochthonous development. Accordingly, regardless of the many differences in the expressions of the Rzucewo Culture, which appear most clearly in its classic phase (Table 3), the author considers that the study area can be viewed in terms of a *centre-periphery* relationship (Grasis, 2002, 72.–73. p.).<sup>13</sup> The Baltic coast, where the Rzucewo Culture traditions predominate, may be regarded as the centre, while the inland areas, where the Rzucewo Culture and the indigenous cultures exist in parallel, may be regarded as the periphery.<sup>14</sup> The character of the centre-periphery relationship in this suggested model is not yet clear, and evidently does not correspond in all respects to the classic definition of such a relationship (Rowlands, 1987).

It should be noted that the characteristics mark-

ing the contrast between the coastal and inland area actually represent differences between the early and classic phase of the culture. In the material from the settlements with an "unmixed" assemblage, which in the early phase are known only from the coastal area, we find many survivals from the indigenous Nemunas and Narva traditions, along with the influence of the Globular Amphora Culture and other cultures (Rimantienė, 1980, p. 65–66; Felczak, 1983, p. 67–68; Saltsman, 2004, p. 153). To a large degree the appearance of the new international traditions is restricted to the pottery, and this can be taken as evidence in favour of the theory of autochthonous development. It is also significant that in the early phase there are no Rzucewo Culture settlements with short-term occupation, indicative of a mobile lifestyle.<sup>15</sup> The only indicator of "mobility" is the burial evidence.

<sup>13</sup> A centre-periphery relationship, although of a somewhat different nature, is also indicated by Dž. Brazaitis (2005, p. 225).

<sup>14</sup> In the Early Bronze Age material, a centre-periphery relationship can be observed quite clearly (Grasis, 2002, 73.–74. p., 6. att.). There is a striking correlation between the central area of the Early Bronze Age and the distribution of the long-term settlements of the Rzucewo Culture along the Baltic Sea coast. On a retrospective basis, it may be suggested that the coastal area emerged as the central area already at the end of the Neolithic.

<sup>15</sup> The author includes as settlements with short-term occupation only those settlements that have no visual indication of a cultural layer and have a very small amount of pottery and other material. The settlement of Rewa has also been described in the literature as a short-term habitation (Felczak, 1983, p. 67), but it does not reflect mobility.

Thus the course of cultural development brought very substantial changes in the character of the settlement sites, leading to the development of short-term occupations in the peripheral area during the classic phase.<sup>16</sup>

### Forms of burial

Rzucewo Culture burials are quite uniformly distributed, without marked concentrations (Fig. 1). It is paradoxical that the coastal belt, which is marked by long-term settlements with rich assemblages of finds, has very few burials. A disproportion in the different forms of sites is observable, where the cultural centre is basically characterised by long-term settlements, while the periphery has short-term settlements and burials.

In analysing the burials in this particular cultural region, they cannot be regarded as a unified group reflecting the new international traditions. Rather, they differ in their general character, and in terms of their location, occurring in a variety of natural settings. In terms of these factors, three basic groups of burials can be distinguished,<sup>17</sup> although in some aspects the typological distinction is only an approximate one. 1) *Burials on Rzucewo Culture settlement sites* occur mainly along the Baltic coast, i.e. in the central area (Kilian, 1955, p. 66; Šturms, 1970, p. 168–169). These burials can be variously interpreted, and it is thought that they do not reflect the general practices at the coast. According to one view, they bear some relation to ritual cannibalism (Brazaitis, 2005, p. 231). It is hard to say whether this is actually so, but the burials of this kind may be thought to represent a mix of the traditions of the new international style and the indigenous Neolithic. 2) *Burials on the banks of lakes populated by hunter-fisher-gatherers*, sometimes in combination with burials of the people of the indigenous culture. In

the absence of precise datings, the chronological relationship between these two groups is unclear. Corresponding to this category are almost all the burial sites lying north of the River Daugava, as well as a string of burial sites on islands in lakes right at the periphery of the culture. 3) *Single burials and groups of burials* represent the category of monuments most directly characterising the ideology of the new international style, and possibly also a new economic model. These are grouped in the vicinity of rivers and lakes, showing quite a clear distribution away from the general “Stone Age setting”.

### III. THE SELGAS BURIAL AND THE RZUCEWO CULTURE: BURIAL PRACTICE

Before turning to the analysis of Rzucewo Culture burials, we will briefly consider general theoretical approaches to the interpretation of burial practices. We will also formulate analytical criteria that are significant with regard to this culture.

#### Theory

Burial practices represent one of the main sources for the interpretation of prehistoric society. Over the course of time, various archaeological schools have expressed different views on the degree to which these reflect the once-existing social reality, and on the approaches to reading the material in order to discover this reality.<sup>18</sup> It is the theoretical position of L. Binford and A. Saxe that has attracted the greatest amount of attention. This position includes two main ideas: 1) there is a relationship between the complexity of burial practices and social complexity, and 2) the manner of burial of each individual relates to their social role and social status in life. L. Binford's approach is connected with W. Goodenough's concept of the *social persona*, where

<sup>16</sup> Possibly, in the future, when more precise dates are obtained, some of the short-term habitations may prove to be earlier than is considered at present.

<sup>17</sup> V. Lang (1998, p. 95) suggests a similar division of the burials.

<sup>18</sup> The overview of various approaches to the interpretation of burial rites is based on: Stutz, 2003, p. 106–129; Šnė, 2002, 222.–225. p.

he laid down the possible dimensions of the social persona, encompassing gender, age, social rank and affiliation to the social group.

At the same time, other authors have pointed out that it is not society and social reality, but the society's ideology that is expressed in burials (Schulke A.). Testing the hypothesis of the connection between the status of the individual and the character of the grave structures in various societies (Tainter J. A., Carr C.), regularities have been observed, but it is significant that only in rare cases do grave goods function as status indicators. It is emphasised in particular that only certain kinds of grave goods are connected with social status.

A. Saxe makes the assumption, as one of the elements of these hypotheses, that in different cultures the ritual aspects of social organisation may follow a similar pattern. This idea is contested by L. Goldstein, who points to the great variability of cultures, on account of which it seems unlikely that societies in similar economic or environmental conditions will exhibit similarities in aspects of symbolic and ritual organisation. Without going further into this hypothesis, it should be added that in looking at the Corded Ware Culture, we can speak of a process that runs quite counter to it. Namely, in different economic and environmental conditions, at least in the initial stage, similar burial practices developed. This suggests only that the entity that we know as the "*Corded Ware Culture*" is, in its essence, based solely on *ideology*.

In archaeological terms, the expressions of ideology are not observable directly. In burial practices, they may be sought in the analysis of patterns relating to burials of individuals of different gender and age, assessing the amount of effort invested in the burial rites, and seeking to identify those categories of artefacts that might be indicative of status (Drenth, 1992).

### Analytical criteria

When we consider the objects representing the international style, two categories of artefacts, namely the "*Type A*" amphorae (Buchvaldek, 1986) and the bone belt plates (Leczycki, 1992) serve to connect the Rzucewo Culture with Central Europe, clearly marking the directions in which there was an exchange of information. Thus, in analysing the Rzucewo Culture burials, it is worth mentioning the regularities observed in this territory. The burials show the observance of marked ritual distinctions between adult individuals of different genders. This is seen in the first place in the orientation: males are oriented with heads to the W, while females are placed with heads to the E, the burials of both genders placed facing S. Secondly, there are differences in the position of the skeleton: the males are placed with the legs to the right, while females are placed with the legs to the left (Buchvaldek, 1980, p. 395, 398; Siemen, 1992, p. 230, fig. 1). Thirdly, this is seen in the artefact assemblages, where particular artefact categories and pottery forms are observed in connection with one or other gender (Neustupný, 1973).

In the region under study, such a detailed analysis of burials has not been undertaken. As regards burial orientation, no strict regularities have been observed, and it has been noted that the position of the skeleton does not bear a relationship to gender (Kilian, 1950, p. 64; Šturms, 1970, p. 189; Loze, 2003, 100. p.). However, in recent research, with a refinement of the anthropological data, clear relationships have emerged linking the body position and gender (Gerhards, 2003, 2. tab.). Accordingly, in order to obtain a fuller picture, we may consider the Selgas burial against the general background of the burials of the Rzucewo Culture region, utilising as comparative material the second and third groups of

burials distinguished here.<sup>19</sup> The following traits and groups of traits form the main basis of the discussion: 1) flat graves, barrows and grave structures, 2) the distance between burials arranged in a group, 3) the orientation and body position, and 4) the artefactual assemblages.

#### Flat graves, barrows and grave structures

Flat graves are generally characteristic of the Rzucewo Culture. Single burials in barrows are known only in exceptional cases in the South-Eastern Baltic. Two definite barrow burial sites can be identified: Kaup and Kl. Babenz (*Babięty Male*), the latter site having a group of barrows (Fig. 1). In the literature, other possible barrow burials are mentioned, in this same area (Kilian, 1955, p. 64), and in Lithuania and Latvia (Šturms, 1970, p. 285), but there is no firm evidence for identifying them as such. At both of these sites, the barrows were enclosed within a palisade, as indicated by ditches around the perimeter (Kilian, 1955, p. 65, Abb. 289; Sobieraj, 2001, ryc. 3).

These barrows are the only burial sites where specially-formed grave structures have been identified. The most vivid example is the Kaup barrow, where the burial had been placed on stone cobbling (Heydeck, 1893, p. 49). Some kind of structure may also have been present at the Kl. Babenz (*Babięty Male*) site (Kilian, 1955, Fundliste II, Nr. 24; Sobieraj, 2001, p. 33, ryc. 5).

In terms of ritual, the barrows represent the most complex kind of burial site, and judging from the few finds recovered at these sites, they may date from the early phase of the Rzucewo Culture. The

known barrow burial sites are located in the cultural centre and in the periphery, and thus do not show any spatial distinction. Such a division partly contradicts the essence of the centre-periphery relationship, since the centre not only controls knowledge and resources, but also displays more complex burial practices (Kristiansen, 1987). However, if the barrows do indeed relate to the early phase of the culture, then they belong to a time when the Rzucewo Culture was still forming, and when the centre-periphery relationship was not yet so clearly marked.

From another point of view, the creation of barrows points not only to a new ideology, but also to a new social model. There are a variety of views regarding the emergence of the Rzucewo Culture, but a large section of researchers support the idea that there was a significant continuation of indigenous tradition in this culture, which in its initial phase basically appears as a society of hunter-fisher-gatherers (Rimantienė, 1980, p. 65–66; Felczak, 1983, p. 68). This brings to the fore the issue of whether the advent of the international style in a food-procurement economic setting could have brought about such radical changes in society that not only changed the burial ritual on an individual basis, but also the attitude of the community towards its individual members. On the basis of the present evidence, at least, this seems unlikely. Thus, it might be suggested that the barrow burials reflect migration, indicating the arrival of a group of people from areas to the south-west or south.

Why did the tradition of barrow burial not develop further? This question is difficult to answer,

<sup>19</sup> A wide variety of attitudes are represented in the literature regarding “possible” and “definite” Corded Ware Culture burials, and different lists of burials appear in various publications. In assessing the material, the burial sites shown in Figure 1 are considered. In a string of cases it is quite difficult to determine the total number of burials at such sites and their connection with the culture discussed here. Although the crouched body position is a characteristic tradition of the Corded Ware Culture, some of the dated, unfurnished burials have turned to be from a different period altogether (see below). The analysis is based on a subjective selection of burials, seeking to include only “securely identifiable” material. The map in Figure 1 and the material considered here has been compiled on the basis of publications on particular sites and general works (Butrimas, 1985, 1992; Butrimas, Kazakevičius, 1985; Engel, 1935; Girininkas, 2002; Grasis, 1996; Gumiński, 1997; Heydeck, 1893; Kazakevičius, 1993; Kilian, 1955; Loze, 1987; Sobieraj, 2001; Stubavs, 1980; Šturms, 1927, 1970; Tebelškis, 2002; Waluś, Manasterski, 2002, 2004; Zagorskis, 1961, 1987; Лозе, 1979, 1987; Перпенко, 1988). The German names are given for sites in the former territory of East Prussia, apart from Lithuania and the recent finds from Poland.

but it may be thought that the main reason lies with the specific character of the culture in question. Essentially, the Rzucewo Culture, at least in its centre, is a vivid example of economic *adaptation* to the utilisation of marine and coastal resources. In many regards, it continues the preceding Neolithic traditions, the influence of the international style affecting only some of the many levels of social thinking, and thus not having the effect of altering the social order right down to the foundations. Not only in the period under consideration, but in others as well, the south-eastern Baltic, in terms of its geographical position, is an area through which various innovations reached the East Baltic from the rest of Europe. These new currents always appear more vividly along the Baltic coast, in many cases without affecting the more distant inland areas.

The Selgas site lies in the distant periphery of the

Rzucewo Culture, so the possibility that there was a barrow here also seems remote from a theoretical viewpoint, considering the pattern observed so far.

#### The distance between burials forming a group

The known number of burials at the sites generally varies between one and three. The large number of burials distinguished at the Abora II site (Лозе, 1979, с. 43–52, рис. 38) should be reassessed, considering the possibility that the people buried here may not relate to the Rzucewo Culture.<sup>20</sup> The largest number of burials has so far been discovered at the cemetery of Zvejnieki (Zagorskis, 1987, 86. p., 22. att.), but here, too, some of the “crouched” burials may relate to an earlier period.<sup>21</sup> One section of all the known burials are double burials.

As can be seen from Table 4, we cannot speak of any overall patterns with respect to the arrangement

Table 4. The distance between burials (approximate figures).

Site	No. of burials	Distance (m)	Source
Zvejnieki	8 ?	6–165	Zagorskis, 1987, 3.–5. att.
Kvāpāni II	4	1.5–7	Лозе, 1987, рис. 5
Kreiči	3	2.5–12	Zagorskis, 1961, 2. att.
Bāļas	2	3	Archive of the NHML
Grīnerti	2	1.5	Archive of the NHML
Plinkaigalis	3	6	Kazakevičius, 1993, pav. 9
Hohenbruch	2	20	Kilian, 1955, Fundliste II, Nr. 16
Eiche	3	2–50	Kilian, 1955, Fundliste II, Nr. 14
Erdmannsruh	4 ?	1–10	Kilian, 1955, Fundliste II, Nr. 8

<sup>20</sup> The burials are disturbed, so in many cases the body position is unclear. Out of a total of 61 burials, the author regards eight as being connected with the Rzucewo Culture. It has been suggested that the possible form of burial was the “house of the dead” (Loze, 1987, 6. p.), so it is possible that what appears as a crouched position came about with the collapse of such a ritual structure (Gerhards, 2003, 120. p.). Only a maximum of three crouched burials can be distinguished with a degree of confidence (Nos. 6, 33 and 55), of which the first is also open to doubt, since it is in a collective grave, along with three other individuals buried in various positions.

<sup>21</sup> Out of 11 crouched burials, one – No. 197 – is dated to the Early Neolithic: 6410±95 BP (Ua–19808 – Eriksson, Lõugas, Zagorska, 2003, Table 1). Possibly dating from an even earlier period is a double burial (303–304), with one individual buried in crouched position on the stomach and the other in extended position. Also questionable is the connection with this culture of child burial 88. In the first place, the burial is disturbed, and the main criterion linking it with the Late Neolithic is the pottery found by the shoulder. Secondly, there is a cultural layer nearby, with other fragments of pottery, seemingly indicating the location of a settlement. Thus, the pottery found together with the burial is not a clear indication of a connection with the Rzucewo Culture.

of burials in groups. Some burials are close together, while others are quite far apart (up to 20 m or more). Neither can all the burials arranged in a group be regarded as contemporaneous. Thus, at the cemetery of Plinkaigalis, two dated burials out of three spaced relatively close together are separated by a considerable time interval (Table 5), and this suggests that people returned to this same spot repeatedly. At Zvejnieki, on the other hand, two relatively synchronous burials (Nos. 137 and 186) lie more than 100 m apart (Table 5), indicating that in chronological terms the distance is not significant. What determined these traditions? The economic model, some specific form of activity, or social individualism resulting from these factors? At the present state of knowledge, no clear answer can be given, only hypotheses can be presented. It is clear only that the burial sites are not simply evidence of migration routes, and indicate instead that some unknown period of time was spent at each particular place. This is confirmed not only by the chronological example mentioned above, but also by consideration of the reality, since it is unlikely that in all these cases several people died simultaneously.

Certain authors have suggested that the form of burial that we can observe relates only to one part of society – the elite – and that there was another form of burial, too, which is not possible to record archaeologically (Malmer, 1962, p. 815; Drenth, 1992, p. 212). If this really were so, then it would mean that the length of time spent by the human group in its economic zone was significantly longer, and “mobility” would be much more restricted. However, in the particular case, this remains a hypothesis that cannot be proven, like so many others.

In view of the considerable variation in the distance between individual burials and groups of burials, any of the known find-spots still has further potential, and we cannot be sure that the total number of burials has been uncovered at any particular site. We may go even further and question whether there

actually were “single graves”? Thus, there is an even greater possibility that the “mobility” ascribed to the culture is partly the result of misinterpretation. In fact, the small amount of available material actually rather suggests the idea of a *cyclic aspect in the economic activities* within a limited area, and it is possible that a single group of people established burial sites at several inhabited locations within their territory.

### Orientation and position of the skeleton

What was the character of this relatively mobile society and what determined its structural principles? Among the main indicators marking a society's attitude towards the deceased of different gender is orientation and body position. In order to assess the Selgas burial from this perspective, the data accumulated hitherto have been re-evaluated. Included in the analysis were only those burials whose sex, age, body position and orientation are clearly known. The analysis is based on individuals aged at least 18 years, utilising the most reliable anthropological data (Šturms [Perret] 1970, p. 291; Žukauskaitė, 2004, Table 1; Gerhards, 2003, 2. tab.). The patterns that emerge in the course of the analysis shed doubt in certain cases on the accuracy of anthropological determinations, but at the same time it is quite evident that there are departures from the general pattern.

In spite of a large number of exceptions, it is clear that the majority of burials do conform to a pattern of opposed orientation, but in this case, compared with Central Europe, we do not see an E–W orientation, but a N–S orientation instead, as has already been pointed out in other studies (Lang, 1998, p. 92; Loze, 2003, 100. p.). The directions of orientation do not strictly keep to particular points of the compass: they show some spread, and the pattern is clearly seen only when the data is graphically presented (Fig. 6).<sup>22</sup> Female burials are

<sup>22</sup> The orientation is given in terms of the nearest cardinal point of the compass. In certain cases there are differences between the orientation of the skeleton and that of the grave, so that the results differ slightly. Here, this has not been considered and the data are used as published.

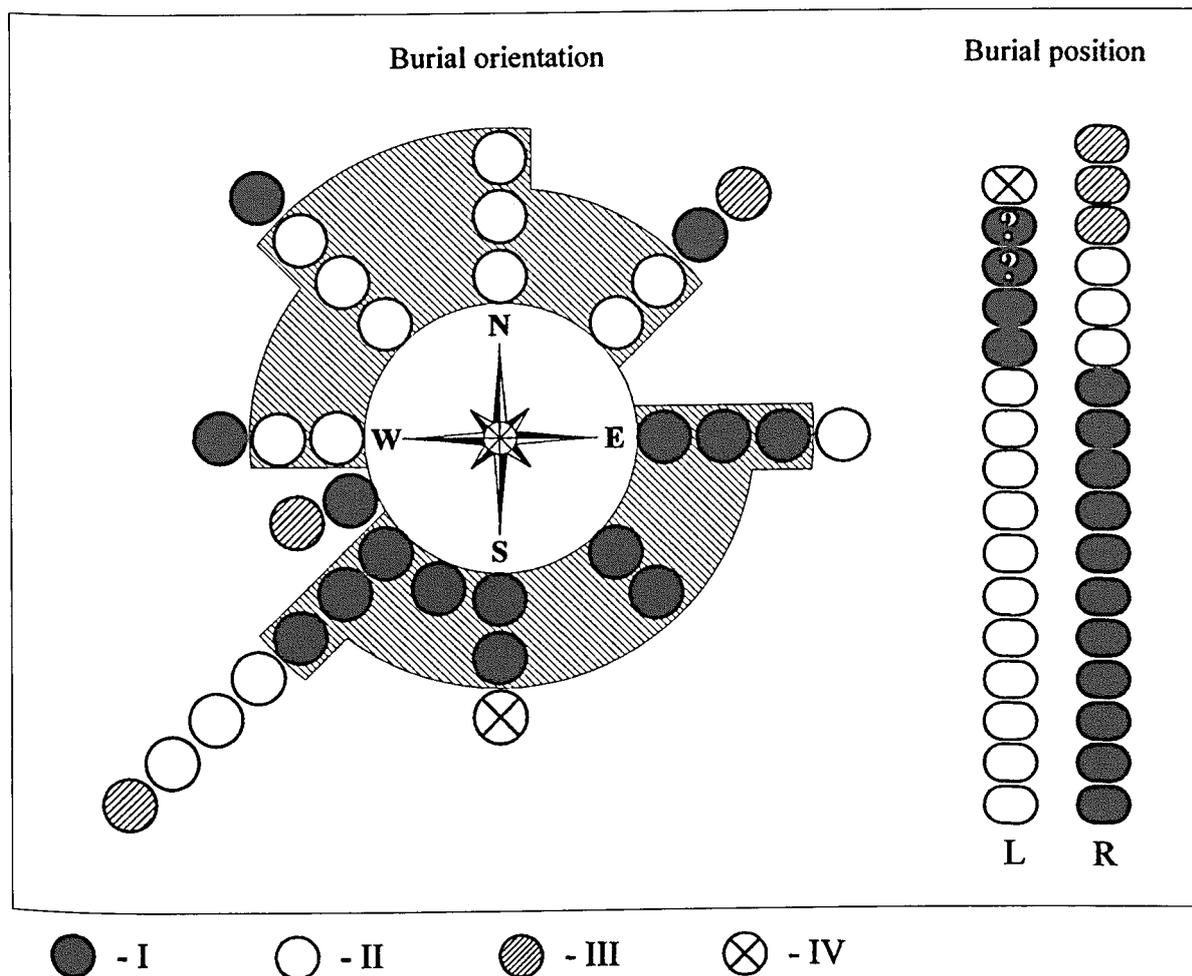


Fig. 6. Orientation and position of Rzucewo Culture burials: I – male (18<); II – female (18<); III – juvenile (11–17); IV – children (<5); L – legs flexed to left; R – legs flexed to right.

oriented  $N\pm 45^\circ$ , while males are oriented  $S\pm 45^\circ$ , the extreme examples of the latter approaching an orientation to E.

While the above pattern is somewhat non-specific and variable, the body position clearly indicates two positions. The female burials have the legs to the left, while male burials have legs to the right (Fig. 6), which corresponds to the general pattern observed in Central Europe. In terms of this pattern, the Selgas burial observes the characteristic female orientation, while the body position corresponds to that of males. Is this fortuitous, is it a matter of erroneous sex determination or an indication of social attitudes? In this case, there is no doubt about the sex, so only the

other two possibilities remain, and these are discussed in the context of the grave goods.

#### The artefacts and their context

The burials in the study do not stand out as richly furnished, and a considerable part are unfurnished, the body position being the only feature that reflects the international style. Exceptions also occur: cases where characteristic Rzucewo Culture finds occur in association with burials in extended position, indicating alternative forms of interaction of the traditions (Kilian, 1955, p. 64). Compared with other regions of Europe, where pottery is found in up to 90% of cases (Buchvaldek, Koutecký, 1972,

Table 5. Rzucewo Culture grave inventories and datings (in chronological and developmental order).

Burial	Sex	Age	Pottery	Grave goods	Date BP	Date Cal. BC**
<b>Early phase of the culture</b>						
Kl. Babenz, Barrow 1	Adult male*	–	Beaker	Battle axe (Type A), scraper, bead, flake	?	–
Kl. Babenz, Barrow III	?	–	Miniature vessel (amphora)	Knife	?	–
Ząbie, Feature No. 78	?	18–25	Beaker	Flint implement, 4 pendants, 3 flakes	4370±70 (Ki-9772)	3090–2900
Sarkapi	Adult male	40–45	3 sherds	Battle axe (Type A), belt plate	4285±75 (Ua-19801)	3030–2750
Zvejnieki, Burial 137	Adult female	40–45	Amphora (Type A)	Chisel, awl, 2 pendants	4280±60 (Ua-19811)	3020–2770
Plinkaigalis, Burial 242	Adult female	>55	–	2 knives, scraper	4280±75 (OxA-5936)	3020–2710
Zvejnieki, Burial 186	juvenile (male)	11–13	–	2 belt plates	4190±90 (Ua-15545)	2900–2630
Selgas	Adult female, child	40–45 1–1½	Amphora, 2 beakers (?), 3 pots (?)	Knife, chisel, 2 awls, antler, 2 bones	4165±60 (Ua-19802)	2880–2670
<b>Late (classic) phase of the culture</b>						
Spiginas, Burial 2	Adult male	55–60	–	–	4080±120 (ГНН-5570)	2870–2480
Plinkaigalis, Burial 241	Adult female	50–55	–	–	4030±55 (OxA-5928)	2620–2470
Gyvakarai	Adult male	35–45	–	Battle axe, celt, knife, “dress-pin”	3745±70 (Ki-9467) 3710±80 (Ki-9471)	2280–2030 2270–1970
<b>Burials of indeterminate date</b>						
Waldersee	Adult male*	–	Beaker	Battle axe, knife, 2 flakes	–	–
Bieberstein, Burial 1	Adult male	40	Beaker	celt, knife, “dress-pin”, bead, bones	–	–
Damerau	Juvenile	9–11	Beaker	Bone point	–	–

\* Sex determination based on the character of the grave inventory.

\*\* Calibrated using OxCal v3.10. Range of one sigma (68.2%) probability. Sources of radiocarbon dates: Zagorska, 2000, Table I; Girininkas, 2002, 3 lentelė; Eriksson, Lõugas, Zagorska, 2003, Tables 1, 3; Waluś, Manasterski, 2004, p. 34, Note 2.

p. 160; Kempisty, Włodarczak, 2000, p. 145), in the culture analysed here it is very rare in association with burials and can be regarded more as the exception than the rule. Precisely because of this, the considerable amount of pottery at Selgas deserves particular attention. In the following discussion, those burials with individual potsherds

are set aside, since such finds cannot be clearly attributed to the inventory.

When we look at adult burials with pottery, although admittedly there is very little comparative material, we can observe a link between amphorae and female burials, something that is observed, in addition to Selgas, at Zvejnieki (Zagorskis, 1987,

79.–80. p., XXXI tab.). Beakers, on the other hand, are known only from male burials in the south-eastern Baltic (Kilian, 1955, Fundliste II, Nr. 3, 6, 12, 24, Abb. 297e, 301a, 303a, 305a; Waluś, Manasterski, 2004, p. 33–34, tabl. I, II), and a miniature vessel (an amphora) has been found with a barrow burial of indeterminate sex (Sobieraj, 2001, ryc. 6) (Table 5). In terms of the area of distribution, pottery is mainly found in the south-eastern Baltic, with two exceptions in Latvia.

The Zvejnieki burial with an amphora also had a bone chisel and awl, so that this burial assemblage actually shows a very close parallel with Selgas. The date obtained for Zvejnieki relates to the very beginning of the culture, while the Selgas burial is later (Table 5). In typological terms, the pottery from Zvejnieki may be regarded as representing one of the elements of the so-called “A Horizon”: the Type A amphorae. The basic variant of the amphorae defined as a flat-based globular or biconical vessel, with or without handles at the sides, and with a specific kind of decoration: radially arranged groups of incised lines, delimited by incised or dotted designs (Buchvaldek, 1986, p. 142).

The attitude towards the A Horizon is very varied, some researchers supporting the distinction of such a separate horizon (Buchvaldek, 1997), others denying it altogether, regarding it only as a typological, not a chronological horizon (Jacobs, 1997). Likewise, in the region considered here, there is no agreement regarding this phenomenon, and its elements are not always found on the chronologically earliest sites (Lang, 1998, p. 92; Grasis, 2002, 64. p., 1. att.), but in any case it is the analysis of these components in particular that is of key importance for understanding this cultural phenomenon.

On the basis of a comparison of the Rzucewo Culture settlement sites, it is difficult to derive a logical scheme of the development of pottery, particularly in view of the differences between the coastal and inland area. Even in the central area, among the early coastal sites, right from the beginnings of the culture, we see differences among different groups of settlements. For example, at the

settlement site of Pribrezhnoye, A Horizon elements are absent, and only the local amphora types are known (Saltsman, 2004, p. 150, fig. 6:1–4). On the other hand, at Šventoji, apart from one example of Type A, amphorae are missing altogether (Rimantienė, 1980, p. 61, pav. 50). The largest numbers of amphorae influenced by the international style occur precisely at the classic phase settlements of the coast: Rzucewo (Žurek, 1954, p. 4, tabl. IV: 1–4), Succase (Kilian, 1955, Abb. 1–4) and Nida (Rimantienė, 1989, p. 90–92, pav. 45).

At the periphery, apart from the Zvejnieki amphora, already mentioned, they are virtually absent, and the only exceptions are a Type A find in the area of former East Prussia (Kilian, 1955, Abb. 17) and finds from the settlements of the Lake Lubāns Basin, where a variety of amphora sherds have come to light, including sherds of Type A amphorae (Лозе, 1979, с. 99–100, табл. XLIV:4–8; 1987, с. 27–29, рис. 3:4–7; Loze, 1994).

Thus, the amphora as a form of vessel is basically characteristic of the cultural centre, where, among local forms, examples influenced by the international style also occur. In the multicultural setting of the periphery these appear in small numbers both in association with burials and at settlement sites with mixed assemblages. Thus, the origin of the Selgas find is connected only with the area of the Baltic Sea coast. The forms of the other vessels associated with the Selgas burial give no possibility for wider comparison, being too fragmented.

The basic design on the Selgas amphora – the bands of radial lines – is reminiscent of part of the design composition of the Type A amphora, while the hatched triangles represent a local elaboration. Can we regard the Selgas example as a further derivation of the Type A amphora? Considering the trends of development of indigenous pottery, this seems very likely, since the indigenous material does not include ceramics from which this particular kind of pottery could have developed. Thus, proceeding from the analysis of the amphora, we can make some quite well-founded statements. In the first place, the Selgas burial, regardless of its location far inland, is

connected with the coastal area – the centre. Secondly, in terms of form and decoration, the pottery reflects one of the variations of the international style.

Another find category, namely long flint knives, are known both from the Kl. Babenz (*Babięty Male*) barrow (Sobieraj, 2001, ryc. 6), and from the female burial at Plinkaigalis (Butrimas, Kazakevičius, 1985, p. 16–17, pav. 6, 7:1, 4). In the former case, the find from the barrow can only theoretically be connected with the early phase of the culture, but in the latter case this is confirmed by the dating (Table 5). Thus, the provision of knives of this kind is observed right from the beginning of the Rzucewo Culture and they constitute a stable element of the inventory throughout the period of existence of the culture, as shown by the find from Gyvakarai (Tebelškis, 2002, pav. 4) (Table 5). Knives also occur in a large number of less clearly dateable burial assemblages in the south-eastern Baltic (Kilian, 1955, Fundliste II, Nr. 6, 8, 26, 27, Abb. 291: IIb, 293b, 297b, 300). Overall, it clearly appears as a men's tool, as confirmed most directly by the find in the Norūnai Hoard together with battle axes and celts (Brazaitis, Piličiauskas, 2005, p. 87, pav. 29:1, 2).

The bone awls and chisel found with the Selgas burial are represented in other find assemblages in addition to the above-mentioned Zvejnieki burial (Kilian, 1955, Fundliste II, Nr. 9, 14, Abb. 304a), and in most cases they have been found together, indicating a link between these two categories of tool. Part of an antler, which might be interpreted as a piercing tool, has also been found with a male burial at Aizupe (Šturms, 1927, 23. p., 13. att.). The shell is an unusual element in the grave inventory. The only similar find known so far, with perforations for suspension, is from a male (?) burial in the coastal area of the Baltic Sea (Kilian, 1955, Fundliste II, Nr. 14).<sup>23</sup>

Assessing the find context of particular objects recovered at Selgas, we see that they relate to the

characteristic set of male grave goods, and this suggests that the body position, too, is not fortuitous.

It is not clear how the unworked animal bones placed as part of a group of objects at the feet of the female burial at Selgas should be interpreted. In the first place, it is possible that they represent some currently unidentifiable tool category. Secondly, in view of their position, it is somewhat doubtful whether they should be regarded as food items belonging to the grave inventory.<sup>24</sup> This whole group of objects might instead be regarded as an offering made in the course of the burial rites. A similar case is recorded in the south-eastern Baltic, where a flint blade and a bone awl had been placed on a sandstone block (Kilian, 1955, Fundliste II, Nr. 14).

Unworked animal bones are also known from other burials, but these do not provide any clues for interpretation (Kilian, 1955, Fundliste II, Nr. 6, 8), and have been placed in a different location: by the side of the body. There is a unifying feature: in all cases where the animal species has been determined, the bones have been found to be those of wild animals. It is similar with the bone artefacts, which likewise derive only from wild animals (Kilian, 1955, Fundliste II, Nr. 8, 14). There is the possibility that, as with some of the anthropological data, the animal species has been wrongly identified in some of the older material. Initially, with regard to the Zvejnieki burial with an amphora, one of the tools was mentioned as being made of roe deer bone (Zagorskis, 1987, 38. p.), but more recent analysis indicates that it is in fact sheep or goat (Eriksson, Lōugas, Zagorska, 2003, p. 7).

As with part of the Selga artefacts, the finds of unworked bones are connected more with male burials, the inventory of which includes shaft-hole axes and pottery, indicating that the whole assemblage of finds bears some relationship to social attitudes.

<sup>23</sup> It is possible that in this case the sex has been incorrectly determined, as suggested by the body position.

<sup>24</sup> Similar finds of bones are generally interpreted as remains of food provided as part of the grave inventory (Šturms, 1970, p. 188).

### Burial practices and their pattern of development

The Rzucewo Culture in general, setting aside some exceptional cases, is marked by common trends. The difference in attitudes towards deceased individuals in relation to their gender is revealed in the body position, and less clearly in the orientation. As regards the grave goods, there are a small number of objects that can be strictly divided according to gender. On the basis of present evidence, amphorae, as well as bone awls and bone chisels may be regarded as typical female grave goods, while other objects – celts and flint knives, are also connected with females, although several examples are known from male burials, too. The range of characteristic male artefacts is much more definite: it includes beakers, shaft-hole axes (battle axes)<sup>25</sup>, celts, bone belt plates, bone “dress-pins” and long flint knives. Likewise, the barrow burials with various ritual structures are also thought to be those of males (Drenth, 1992, p. 208). Ornaments have been found on the burials only in small numbers and do not play an important role. In considering artefacts as indicators of social status, we may note the large number of button-shaped amber beads (50) found with a male burial (Waluś, Manasterski, 2002, p. 64–65, ryc. 4–7).

Child burials cannot be characterised more specifically because of their small number and the lack of detailed information. The few known juvenile burials correspond to the male burials in terms of orientation and body position.<sup>26</sup> Because the material is fragmentary, it is impossible to draw any definite conclusions, but it may be noted that artefacts characteristic of the adults (the celt, belt plate and “dress-pin”) appear in the grave inventory of individuals aged about 11–13. This may mark the

approximate age when juveniles attained adult status. A similar age of attainment of adulthood (14–16 years) has been observed at the Bronze Age cemetery of Ķivutkalns (Денисова, Граудонис, Гравере, 1985, с. 156), and this provides some confirmation for the idea.

Thus, both in terms of artefacts characteristically associated with males, and in terms of the creation of elaborate burials, male domination in society is marked, something that is clearly seen in other Corded Ware Culture groups as well (Drenth, 1992, p. 211). In the literature, mention has been made of the social role of older men in particular (Gerhards, 2003, 122. p.), but it should be borne in mind that the burials reflect only the end of physical existence, so this criterion should not be regarded as having played a role.

How should the Selgas find be regarded? In terms of the presence of particular components, it forms part of the overall group of Rzucewo Culture burials, but in terms of its location, it represents an atypical case in the general pattern seen in Latvia and Lithuania. It is also atypical in terms of the characteristic male body position and the presence of several kinds of artefacts characteristic of males.

An exception of a similar kind, where the sex determination likewise seems beyond doubt, is Burial 241 at Plinkaigalis, although this burial is unfurnished (Butrimas, Kazakevičius, 1985, p. 16, pav. 5). Regarding body position as the main indicator of gender, a string of male burials should be considered that are also placed in the position characteristic of females (Fig. 6). Can we draw any parallels here? It should be noted that, apart from two cases, we cannot be completely sure about the sex determination, so these cannot be regarded as definite cases. Likewise, in other Corded Ware Culture groups, there are

<sup>25</sup> Although the idea that stray finds of battle axes may be regarded as deriving from destroyed graves has come to be accepted virtually as a fact, one cannot altogether agree with it. Such an interpretation seems doubtful, bearing in mind the small number of axe finds from the known burial inventories. It is only at 16 out of 45 analysed burial sites that axes were actually present in one of the graves, indicating the axe is not a typical element in the male grave inventory. In view of this disproportionately low number, it is possible that at least one section of the axes derive from ritual hoards (Grasis, 2002, 75. p.).

<sup>26</sup> It is hard to say whether this idea can be generalised, since two out of the three cases, based on the grave inventory, may be suggested as burials of boys. There is no information about the orientation and body position of girls.

exceptions to the general pattern linking body position and sex (Siemen, 1992, fig. 1; Kempisty, Włodarczak, 2000, p. 135), and there may be a very wide variety of reasons for this.

Looking at the general features of the Corded Ware Culture, it is undeniable that this society was no longer completely egalitarian (Kristiansen, 1984, p. 84). Among the men, certain categories of artefacts can be distinguished that we might regard as items of prestige, indicative of status, but such artefact categories are not found for the women. All the objects that we may connect with prestige and status – the battle axes (Malmer, 1992, p. 243) and the belt plates (Grasis, 1996, 62. p.) – belong to the widely distributed *international style*. Competition and efforts to establish a link with the new international ideology are usually seen as connected with chiefdoms, where these factors were utilised by the ruling elite (Earle, 1991, p. 7). However, this form of social organisation is hard to demonstrate even for the succeeding period, the Bronze Age (Kristiansen, 1984, p. 86).

Battle axes with an imitation casting seam (Type A) have a wide distribution in Europe, while bone belt plates occur in a more limited area. It is interesting to note that the belt plates are known mainly in the same area as one of the main elements of the A Horizon of the Corded Ware Culture – the Type A amphora (compare: Buchvaldek, 1986, Abb. 1 and Leczycki, 1992, Abb. 1). In view of this, it is possible that the Type A amphorae and their derivatives also belong to the category of prestige items. Such an idea is also supported by studies of living cultures, where various pottery forms symbolising status have been identified (Hantman, Plog, 1982, p. 242–243).

Viewed in this light, the Selgas burial might be regarded as an expression of the highest female status, where the body position and part of the artefactual assemblage emphasise a symbolic affiliation to the dominant male gender. Of course, this should only be

regarded as a hypothesis, which requires testing in the future, particularly with regard to the body position.

In the discussion so far, all the material has been considered, without taking into account chronological boundaries. If we now consider change over time, we may divide the dated burials into two approximate groups: 1) the early phase, with the international style artefacts, including the artefacts of Type A and their derivatives, and 2) the late phase, where finds of this kind are not present (Table 5).<sup>27</sup> As is seen in the table, all the burials with a rich array of grave goods belong to the earlier period of existence of the culture, something that indicates quite clearly that the grave inventory was of greater importance during this period in particular. A process of change can be traced, where objects gradually lost their significance as indicators of social status. In the early phase, we can distinguish high-status male and female burials, but in the late phase we can identify only male burials of this kind. All of this indirectly points to a tendency towards greater social “stratification” in the early phase of the Corded Ware Culture, which became more “democratic” over time. A similar process is observable in the Bronze Age (Levy, 1982, p. 115), suggesting a cyclic pattern.

#### IV. INTERPRETATION OF THE CULTURE: THE CENTRE AND PERIPHERY

The model advanced here helps in many respects to group the material into a logical scheme, and sheds some light on developments occurring in this period of prehistory. The periphery extended up to 300 km from the centre, and in the north the lower courses of the Rivers Venta, Abava and Daugava mark natural boundaries (Fig. 1). Outside of the main area, traces of the culture are observed in the areas around Lakes Burtnieki, Lubāna and Ludza.

The centre, as distinguished here, regardless of its specific economic orientation, is the only area where the autochthonous origin of the culture could

<sup>27</sup> This is quite a freely-imposed grouping of the material, and perhaps many readers will not agree with the idea of the amphora from the Selgas burial as relating to Type A.

have taken place (Grasis, 2002, 71. p.). One cannot agree with the idea that the Corded Ware/Rzucewo Culture in the East Baltic came about when one section of the people at the settlements by lakes inhabited by the indigenous hunter-fisher-gatherers adopted food production – agriculture – and accepted the new international ideology (Lang, 1998, p. 97–98). There is no area outside of the coastal south-eastern Baltic that had such potential. In this case, the area of present-day Estonia falls outside of the discussion: in Estonia, other courses of development are also possible.

### **The centre-periphery: the relationship**

One of the most important questions relates to the existence of the Rzucewo Culture in the multicultural setting of the periphery, maintaining its distinctive character in both material and ritual expressions. The main question, most directly affecting the Selgas burial as well, is this: what kind of relationship existed between the centre and the periphery?

In studies of the distribution of elements characteristic of various human groups, it has been observed that the occurrence of these elements falls away as we move in the direction from the main area of settlement out to the margins (Hodder, 1978), where they also occur in the territories of other groups, as a result of exchange. For the Rzucewo Culture, this kind of comparison is not possible, since there is a quantitative and qualitative contrast in the material within its territory. Looking at differences in the distribution of various components, we find as somewhat surprising the distinctiveness of burial practices throughout the area of the Rzucewo Culture and the area connected with its influence. In this connection, let us try to determine whether the burial practices provide evidence of the encounter between indigenous and international traditions.

With regard to the occurrence of burials on settlement sites in the coastal area, we may make

note, in this connection, only of the fact itself, which indicates echoes of the preceding period of the Neolithic. There are some exceptions, where burials with characteristic Rzucewo Culture artefacts occur in association with burials in extended position, in one case in a barrow (Kilian 1955, Fundliste II, Nr. 18, 24). But it is unclear whether these particular cases can be regarded as reflecting more profound processes, or simply as exceptions. However, most of these hybrid cases are found near the coast, in the area where there really is the possibility of autochthonous origin.

As we move further out into the multicultural setting of the periphery, we find cases that might be regarded as reflecting a mix of traditions, but it seems more likely that in these cases the chronology has not been correctly determined. One such example is the Duonkalnis Stone Age cemetery in Lithuania, where two individuals were buried together simultaneously, one in an extended position (No. 2), the other in crouched position (No. 3). The double burial is interpreted as reflecting contact between the Narva and Rzucewo Culture traditions (Бутримас, Гирининкас, 1990). However, as shown by a date from another burial in this cemetery, some of the burials here date from the Late Mesolithic.<sup>28</sup> Thus, considering the general context, these two individuals, too, are most likely to date from that same period. There is an analogous case at Zvejnieki cemetery, where two individuals were buried in different positions (Nos. 303 and 304). In this case, the crouched individual was buried on the stomach (Zagorskis, 1987, 60. p., 22. att.). Also buried on the stomach is a burial possibly from the Late Mesolithic on the settlement site of Vendzavas (Bērziņš, 2002, 33. p.), showing that burial in such a position was practiced in the East Baltic already before the time of the Corded Ware Culture. In all these cases, the “crouched position” is clearly marked by a characteristic feature: the lower legs are bent so as to lie parallel with the femora. Viewed in this light, there is no surprise about

<sup>28</sup> The date obtained for Duonkalnis Burial 4: 6995±65 BP (OxA-5924). Considering this date, other authors, too, have suggested that the other burials are also Late Mesolithic (Antanaitis-Jacobs, Girininkas, 2002, p. 16–17).

Table 6. Stable carbon and nitrogen isotope values for Rzucewo Culture graves.  
(after Eriksson, Lõugas, Zagorska, 2003, Tables 3, 4).

Burial	Sample ID	Skeletal element	Bone/tooth (mg)	Collagen (mg)	$\delta^{13}\text{C}$ (‰)	$\delta^{15}\text{N}$ (‰)	C/N	% C	% N
Sarkani	LAT 03	Fibula	125.1	0.9	-21.6	10.3	3.2	36.3	13.3
Selgas, A	LAT 04	Fibula	142.7	1.8	-21.5	10.2	3.1	39.1	14.5
Selgas, A	LAT 05	Molar tooth	60.6	3.6	-21.3	10.4	3.2	40.9	15.1
Selgas, B	LAT 06	Skull bone	115.6	1.2	-21.8	11.8	3.2	41.0	14.9
Zvejnieki, 137	ZVE 40	Skull bone	142.1	2.8	-21.6	9.7	3.3	35.7	12.7
Zvejnieki, 186	ZVE 10r	Ulna	50.2	1.5	-22.1	10.1	3.1	39.4	15.0

the Early Neolithic date of the crouched burial No. 197 at Zvejnieki.<sup>29</sup> As regards the artefact assemblages, there are forms of artefacts characteristic of the Late Neolithic in general, but no identifiable objects in any of the grave inventories that can be regarded as characteristic specifically of the indigenous cultures.

In looking at the origin of the Corded Ware Cultures, the isolation of these cultures is mentioned as one of the indicators of migration (Kristiansen, 1989, p. 212). In regard to the Rzucewo Culture along the coast – in the centre – we cannot speak of such isolation, while in regard to the periphery this is a question worth considering. At the periphery, compared with the indigenous cultures, a proportion of the short-term occupations with an unmixed assemblage, and likewise the burials, are located in different environmental settings. Only the influence of the Rzucewo Culture is observable, appearing in the forms and decoration of the pottery on the settlement sites of the indigenous population. Overall, it may be seen that the people of the Rzucewo Culture had a different way of life/practiced different activities, and may be thought to have had a different kind of social organisation. Thus, there are marked differences in almost all aspects.

Coming back to the Selgas burial, there are various aspects that show its connection with the centre. This was discussed already with regard to the

amphora. Even more significant in this regard is the shell recovered here: this species of mollusc formerly inhabiting the Baltic Sea, but did not occur in inland waters. Shells have rarely been found with the burials and may be considered as not belonging to the category of what may be described as items of prestige, which may have reached inland areas in the course of exchange.<sup>30</sup> Thus, there is sufficient reason for regarding the Selgas burial, and possibly several others too, as reflecting cases of migration from the coast to inland areas. But is this realistic? In terms of archaeological criteria, there is only a theoretical basis for this idea. Dietary analysis of human bone from a wide chronological range of burials at Zvejnieki cemetery, from the Late Mesolithic right up to the Late Bronze Age, shows that the Rzucewo Culture burials are characterised by a very uniform diet, and there is no evidence of a marine diet in the samples. Among the analysed samples, there is only one case, a Middle Neolithic burial (No. 165) that indicates a mixed marine and freshwater/terrestrial diet (Eriksson, Lõugas, Zagorska, 2003, p. 17, 19). The isotopic values are:  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  -18.8 per mil and  $\delta^{15}\text{N}$  12.0 per mil, differing significantly from the Rzucewo Culture samples (Table 6). Thus, based on the data available so far, we cannot prove, but only suggest, that the centre-periphery relationship was based on migration.

<sup>29</sup> See Note 21. That the burial belongs to this period is confirmed by the dietary analysis, which may be regarded as a chronological indicator (Eriksson, Lõugas, Zagorska, 2003, p. 15).

<sup>30</sup> I. Loze does regard shells as a form of prestige item (2003, 101. p.).

### Economy

What kind of economy/activities did the people of the Rzucewo Culture practice? Was there a difference between the coast and inland area in this regard? On this matter, too, there are various opinions. Regarding the coastal sites, the material is sufficiently rich, albeit somewhat contradictory, but with respect to the inland area there is no direct economic evidence.

On the coastal settlement sites of the early phase there is very little evidence of food production (Rimantienė, 1980, p. 8–20). At the classic phase site of Nida, several different kinds of tools have been identified (mattocks, sickles, grinding stones) that seemingly indicate agriculture (Rimantienė, 1989, p. 68–78). However, considering the location of the site – in the Kuršiu nerija, where the soil conditions are absolutely unsuitable for agriculture – it seems that the role of this activity has been considerably overstated. Pollen analysis, too, provides very little evidence of human activity, since the poor soil conditions did not encourage agriculture and the development of stock-keeping (Król, 1992, p. 293, 298).

In the inland area, on the other hand, there is no economic evidence at all from the few short-term occupation sites that have actually been excavated. If we consider these sites in terms of the suitability of their location for various forms of food production, we obtain a contradictory pattern, but at least one section of them do fit such conditions (Grasis, 2002, 68. p., 2. tab.). Thus, the location of both burials and settlement sites, along with their character, represent practically the only criteria on which we can base an interpretation of the economy of the inhabitants. In view of this, it has been suggested that the people of the Corded Ware Culture did not practice agriculture, but instead controlled the exchange of various materials (flint, amber and slate) and had the role of intermediaries (Girininkas, 2002, p. 87). For example in Estonia, where bones of domestic animals and cereal grains have been found in association with the Corded Ware Culture, it is described as a society of agriculturalists and herders forming small social

groups inhabiting small settlements – farmsteads (Kriiska, 2003, p. 16–20). In the inland areas of the Rzucewo Culture, too, the economy of the inhabitants has been interpreted along similar lines right from the beginnings of research, but it must be admitted that this has been based mainly on logical considerations, rather than on direct evidence.

Currently, researchers in Northern Europe tend to employ a three-stage model of the transition to food production, consisting of availability, substitution and consolidation phases (Zvelebil, Rowley-Conwy, 1984), which has been discussed and commented on in the context of the East Baltic as well (Lang, 1999; Antanaitis-Jacobs, Girininkas, 2002, p. 12–16). The process understood by the term “*neolithisation*” applies to the middle phase, which in the East Baltic relates to the Late Neolithic and the Corded Ware Culture.

In considering this cultural region, it is seen that all innovations, including economic ones, first appear in the area distinguished as the centre of the Rzucewo Culture. At the end of the Middle Neolithic, the first agricultural implements occur by the Baltic Sea coast (Rimantienė, 1999). This did not, however, give rise to a general economic upheaval. Quite the contrary: a society formed on the basis of seal hunting and fishing flourished, one that was familiar with agriculture and stock-keeping, but implemented this knowledge only in a limited way. In western Lithuania, compared with eastern Lithuania, there is a greater percentage of domestic animals (Daugnora, Girininkas, 1995, p. 45–46, fig. 1), something that should certainly not be connected with the Corded Ware Culture, but instead should be considered in relation to the general course of development of the region.

Thus, in the central area we can find both ideological and economic innovation, which in many cases is not actually implemented. But could these have been implemented in the periphery? Moreover, alongside the concept of the centre-periphery, there is also a contrast in terms of economy. In one area we can observe an orientation to food-getting activities relating to the sea and the coast, while in

the other there is an orientation towards one of the forms of food production.

How may we interpret, on the basis of the general situation described above, the finds of wild animals and objects made of these bones that occur in association with burials? The substitution phase, which is regarded as having occurred in the study period, is characterised by a great diversity of food-getting activities, including hunting. It has been particularly emphasised that the process of transition to food production was slow and gradual (Lang, 1998, p. 96). However, in this case, at least in inland areas, the transition is sudden, connected with the appearance of the culture itself. Currently we do not have settlement sites from the early phase of the culture, but the burials and their location are in themselves indicators of the new economic model. Elsewhere, too, there is very little evidence of the economy of the culture, but the presence of domestic animals is seen much more clearly in the burial material (Milisauskas, Kruk, 1989, p. 91–95, tab. 13).

Based on the archaeological material of the study area and the criteria for evaluation, it seems most probable that the periphery was inhabited by a population that, at least in the initial stage, migrated from the centre to the periphery (Grasis, 2002, 73. p.). What was the reason for this? This may relate partly to an increase in the population density and insufficient food resources at the coast, and partly with the influence of the new, international lifestyle, which also offered a new form of economy: food production. This also explains the isolation of the culture in the periphery, since, compared with the population belonging to the indigenous culture, they each occupied their own economic niche. Such an interpretation also serves to explain the parallel existence of two archaeological cultures.

## CONCLUSIONS

Seeking to place the Selgas burial site in the context of the Rzucewo Culture, the general situation that could have existed in the Late Neolithic has been sketched out. Like any interpretation of processes in

prehistory, it is to some degree hypothetical and involves an element of uncertainty. Each particular case can be assessed only in the wider context, which in prehistory is undoubtedly linked with the term “*archaeological culture*”. The Rzucewo Culture is particularly complicated in this regard, since there is a contrast in terms of material between the coastal and the inland area, with differences in the form of settlement sites and burials, and in the economic orientation. The concept of the culture has been shaped by considering these differences as reflecting internal processes, defining the coastal area as the *centre* and the inland area as the *periphery*. Moreover, the periphery is perceived as a multicultural setting, where the Rzucewo Culture existed in parallel with the Narva and Nemunas Culture traditions, the differences in the way of life permitting them to exist in parallel in the same area. In this scheme, the centre is the main area through which all economic and ideological innovations are introduced.

I. Characteristic of the centre are burials on settlement sites, a feature that may be regarded more as a reflection of the traditions of the preceding Neolithic period than as relating to the new international lifestyle. In the coastal zone, both the burial practices and the material from the settlement sites show possible indications of autochthonous origins.

II. In the periphery, regardless of the multicultural setting, the new international lifestyle appears in its most classic forms. The basic principle of social structure related to gender division, clearly marked by the differences in body position, but only partly supported by the orientation data. The material from the graves reflects this gender difference: certain forms of pottery and certain categories of artefacts are connected with one gender or the other. Specially formed burial sites (barrows with grave structures) and objects signifying special status, along with a more emphasised grave inventory, are features connected mainly with males, pointing to their dominant role in society. In this pattern, Selgas represents an atypical case, since the female burial here shows the characteristic male burial position, and part of the grave inventory resembles the set of objects characteristic of male burials. These features

could hypothetically be interpreted as indicators of social attitudes. Thus, it might be suggested that the woman buried here was of high social status. Considering the geographical distribution of the barrows and their connection with male burials, it seems unlikely also, from a theoretical point of view as well, that Selgas represents an example of this form of burial. Judging from the presence of objects indicative of status, juveniles attained the status of adult members of society at about the age of 11–13. The presence of objects indicative of status in the grave inventories also points to changes occurring during the time of existence of the culture. The earlier phase may be described as having a tendency towards “stratification”, while the later phase may be seen as more “democratic”.

III. The location of the sites in the periphery, the material recovered from them and their isolation from the indigenous cultures all point to possible migration from the centre to the periphery.

IV. Two different economic models existed within the frame of one culture. In the coastal area, the orientation was more towards food procurement, while regarding the inland area, it is thought that some form of food production was practiced. The appearance of the international style in two very different economic settings indicates that it was based only on ideology. Most likely, it was not the transition to food production that was the basis for the attractiveness of the new ideology, but precisely the opposite, namely that the new ideology offered a new form of economy, which could only be implemented in the conditions pertaining at the periphery of the culture. We can form an idea of the economic basis of the inland area only from indirect evidence: 1) the culture appears suddenly, with all of its characteristic features, including the economic mode; 2) the social division of society was based on gender, emphasising the role of the male; 3) economic activities could have been based on a cyclic pattern of movement within a limited area. Whether it was agriculture or stock-keeping that was being practiced, or a combination of both, is something to be determined in the course of future research.

*Translated by V. Bērziņš*

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#### ABBREVIATIONS

AE – Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija. Rīga

LA – Lietuvos archeologija. Vilnius

NHML – National History Museum of Latvia

## DVIGUBAS KAPAS SKAISTKALNĒS SELGOSE IR VIRVELINĒS KERAMIKOS/PAMARIŲ KULTŪRA: KULTŪROS MODELIS, LAIDOJIMO PĀPROČIAI IR JŪ POKYČIAI

Normunds Grasis

Santrauka

Vēlējvājame neolite Rytų Pabaltijyje įvyko esminių pokyčių vietos tradicijų raidoje – įsigalėjo Europoje vyravusios *bendraeuropinės tradicijos*. Remiantis Selgų (Latvija) dvigubo kapo medžiaga, straipsnyje analizuojami Pamarių kultūros laidojimo papročiai pagal autoriaus sudarytą kultūros modelį, dalį problemų gvildenant pagal migracijos ar autochtonines teorijas.

Selgų moters ir vaiko dvigubas kapas buvo rastas Žiemgalos lygumos rytinėje dalyje, Nemunėlio upės dešiniajame krante (1, 2 pav.). Šiame kape rasta nemažai dirbinių ir keramikos (4, 5 pav., 2 lent.), kurių analizė leidžia spręsti nemažai problemų. Interpretuojant Pamarių kultūros ūkį įdomu, kad rastos įkapės iš kaulo yra susijusios su miško fauna (1 lent.). Tyrinėjimų metu užfiksuoti duomenys apie galimas

kapo konstrukcijas ir buvusį (?) pilkapi (3 pav.), tačiau tai visiškai pagrįsti surinktų duomenų nepakanka. Šis dvigubas kapas datuojamas Pamarių kultūros periodo viduriu (5 lent.) ir atspindi A horizontą.

Analizuojant Selgų, kaip ir visos kultūros, laidojimo papročius, sudarytas kultūros modelis, kuris padeda suprasti sudėtingą Pietryčių ir Rytų Pabaltijo situaciją vėlyvajame neolite. Tradiciškai su Pamarių kultūra siejamas tik siauras Baltijos jūros pakrantės ruožas, o Rytų Pabaltijo žemyninė dalis tyrinėtojų siejama su Rytų Pabaltijo Virvelinės keramikos ir laivinių kovos kirvių kultūra. Tai dvi skirtingos teritorijos – pajūris ir žemynas, kurias skiria gyvenviečių įrengimo ir laidojimo papročiai, ūkio formos (3 lent.).

Kultūros koncepcija suformuota remiantis vykusiais skirtingais vidiniais procesais, pakrantės teritoriją išskiriant kaip *centrą*, o žemyninę dalį – kaip *periferiją*. Periferija apibūdinama kaip multikultūrinė aplinka, kur kartu egzistuoja Pamarių, Narvos ir Nemuno kultūrų papročiai. Nepaisant skirtingo jų gyvenimo būdo, jos egzistavo bendroje teritorijoje. Centras šioje scheme suprantamas kaip pagrindinė teritorija, per kurią plito ūkinės ir ideologinės inovacijos.

Centrai yra būdingi palaidojimai gyvenvietėse, kurie atspindi ankstyvojo ir viduriniojo neolito tradicijas, bet ne naują bendraeuropinį gyvenimo būdą. Pakrantės teritorijos laidojimo papročiai, gyvenviečių archeologinė medžiaga kalba apie galimus vietinės raidos jų požymius. Periferijoje, nepaisant multikultūrinės aplinkos, naujasis bendraeuropinis bruožas pasižymi klasikinėmis formomis. Tai aiškiai parodo ne tik gyvenviečių pobūdis, bet ir bendraeuropinės ideologijos atspindžiai laidojimo papročiuose.

Pamarių kultūrai yra būdingi plokštiniai kapai, o pilkapiai buvo paplitę tik Pietryčių Pabaltijyje. Tikėtina, kad pilkapiai liudija apie gyventojų migraciją iš pietvakarių ar pietų. Plokštiniuose kapuose palaidojimų randama nuo 1 iki 3, retais atvejais šis skaičius yra didesnis. Tarpai tarp kapų yra įvairūs (4 lent.). Palaidojimai sulenkte padėtyje yra datuojami ankstesniu laikotarpiu nei Pamarių kultūra – vėlyvuojų mezolitu-ankstyvuojų neolitu.

Bendruomenės socialinę sąrangą atspindi mirusiųjų skirstymas pagal lytį – tai atsekama pagal griaučių padėtį, retesniais atvejais – pagal priešingą mirusiųjų orientavimą (6 pav.). Įkapės abiejų lyčių kapuose taip pat yra skirtingos – skiriasi keramikos formos, kiti radiniai. Moterų kapuose paprastai yra randama amforų, kaulinių ylių ir kaltelių, kiti radiniai – įtveriamieji kirveliai ir titnaginiai peiliai nors yra siejami su moterimis, tačiau daugiausia aptinkami priešingos lyties kapuose. Vyrų kapų įkapės ryškesnės – taurelės, pentiniai kirviai (laiviniai kovos), įtveriamieji kirveliai, kaulinės diržų plokštelės, kauliniai „smeigtukai“ ir ankstyvi ilgieji titnaginiai peiliai. Tam tikras laidojimo būdas (pilkapiai su kapų konstrukcijomis) bei tam tikros socialinės padėties atspindinčios įkapės yra susiję su vyrais. Tai rodo jų dominuojančią padėtį visuomenėje.

Selgų atvejis „iškrinta“ iš konteksto, kur moteris palaidota vyrams būdingoje padėtyje, o ir dalis įkapių – vyriškos. Hipotetiškai galima manyti, kad šie požymiai yra socialiniai indikatoriai, kad šiame kape palaidota aukštą padėtį bendruomenėje užėmusi moteris. Pilkapių paplitimo regionas ir tai, kad jie yra siejami tik su vyrų kapais, verčia suabejoti tokio laidojimo būdo buvimu Selgose.

Žiūrėdami chronologiniu aspektu matome, kad dirbiniai laikui bėgant prarado vadinamojo socialinio indikatorius prasnę, be to, vėliau rečiau aptinkami kapuose. Ankstesniu laikotarpiu nesudėtinga išskirti aukštą bendruomeninę padėtį užėmusių vyrų ir moterų kapus, o vėliau jie kartais siejami su vyrų palaidojimais (5 lent.). Ankstyvajam kultūros laikotarpiui būdinga „stratifikacija“, o vėlesniam – „demokratiškumas“. Sprendžiant pagal įkapes galima teigti, kad 11–13 m. amžiaus paaugliai bendruomenėje įgydavo suaugusiojo statusą.

Periferijos paminklų topografinė padėtis, juose surinkta skirtinga nei vietinių kultūrų medžiaga liudija apie galimą migraciją iš centro į periferiją. Tai įmanoma patvirtinti archeologiškai, o mitybos tyrinėjimai to nepatvirtina (6 lent.).

Vienai kultūrai buvo būdingos skirtingos ūkio formos: pajūryje labiau orientuotasi į pasisavinamąjį ūkį, o žemyninėje dalyje jau egzistavo viena iš

gamybinių ūkio šakų. Bendraeuropinis kontekstas rodo, jog skirtingi ūkio modeliai yra susiję su ideologija. Labiausiai tikėtina, kad ne ūkio forma darė įtaką ideologijos pakyčiams, bet atvirkščiai – ideologija ūkio formai, kur šie procesai ypač pasireiškė periferijoje. Apie žemyninės dalies ūkį galima spręsti tik pagal netiesioginius duomenis: 1) kultūra atsirado staiga su visais jai būdingais bruožais; 2) bendruomenės socialinė diferenciacija rėmėsi lyčių pagrindu, kurioje aukščiausią statusą turėjo vyras; 3) skirtingos ūkinės veiklos kryptis galėjo egzistuoti tam tikrose teritorijose. Ar tai buvo žemdirbystė, ar gyvulininkystė, ar abi kartu, – ateities tyrinėjimų uždavinys.

*Iš latvių kalbos vertė E. Vasiliauskas*

#### LENTELIŲ SĄRAŠAS

1 lentelė. Selgų kaulų ir kaulinių dirbinių gyvūnų rūšis.

2 lentelė. Selgose rasta keramika ir puodų formos.

3 lentelė. Pamario kultūros vidiniai skirtumai klasikinėje fazėje.

4 lentelė. Atstumas tarp palaidojimų (nurodyti apytikriai skaičiai).

5 lentelė. Pamarių kultūros įkapės ir jų datavimas (chronologinė ir evoliucinė seka).

6 lentelė. Stabiliųjų anglies ir azoto izotopų pasiskirstymas Pamarių kultūros palaidojimuose.

#### ILIUSTRACIJŲ SĄRAŠAS

1 pav. Pamarių kultūros kapai: I – kultūros centras; II – kultūros periferija; III – pavieniai kapai ir kapų grupės; IV – palaidojimai medžiotųjų-žvejų-rankiotųjų apgyventuose ežerų rajonuose; V – palaidojimai Pamarių kultūros gyvenvietėse; VI – pilkapių grupė; VII – pilkapis.

2 pav. Selgų dvigubo kapo planas ir įkapių padėtis: A – moteris, B – vaikas; 1 – titnaginis peilis; 2, 3 – kaulinės ylos; 4 – ragas; 5 – kaulinis kaltelis; 6, 7 – neapdirbti kaulai; 8 – amfora.

3 pav. Tyrinėti plotai Selgose, atidengti objektai, sienelių pjūviai ir radiniai.

4 pav. Selgų dvigubo kapo įkapės: 1 – titnaginis peilis; 2 – kriauklė; 3, 4 – kaulinė yla; 5 – ragas; 6 – kaulinis kaltas; 7, 8 – neapdirbti kaulai.

5 pav. Selgų puodų formų ir ornamento rekonstrukcijos: 1 – amfora; 2, 3 – taurelės; 4–6 – puodai.

6 pav. Pamarių kultūros palaidojimų orientacija ir griaučių padėtis: I – vyrai (18<); II – moterys (18<); paaugliai (11–17); IV – vaikai (<5); L – kojos sulenktos į kairę; R – kojos sulenktos į dešinę.