
Eneolithic tool-rich graves of Maturus men from SW Poland

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Abstract

The Neolithic period is characterized by offerings deposited in graves. From the beginning of the Eneolithic sacrificed objects are believed to be the indicators of social stratification. Analysis of flint artifacts from the largest Eneolithic cemetery in SW Poland show that tools indicate most significantly symbolic relevance of age and social role of the dead.

The site no. 10/11/12 in Domaslaw is located on the Wrocław Plain and was excavated by the Polish Academy of Sciences between 2006-2008. Twenty four burials form a tight grave field, one more burial was found 84 m to the south. People buried there belonged to the society named Jordanów culture - a part of the Danubian tradition. Graves were either relatively contemporary with each other or ensure continuity (4250-4000 BC). So, we are sure that we are dealing with material from the same source in the social meaning.

The burial pits were oriented north-east - south-west and the bodies lay on their right side facing east (men) or on their left side facing west (women). Graves are preserved very well, showing original layout of skeletons and grave goods, such as vessels, copper jewelry and tools, bone tools and flint tools.

Two of twenty five graves contain skeletons of *Maturus* men, aged approximately 40-50 years. Both graves (nos. 13123; 13131) are the most rich at the necropolis in Domaslaw. Burial pits marked with traces of decayed wooden coffin and partly furnished by stones contain completely or partly preserved skeletons, footed vessels, double-handle amphorae, bath-shaped vessels, pieces of animal carcass, copper and shell jewellery, copper axes or antler T-shaped axe and numerous flint artefacts, respectively 52 and 59 pieces, including implements made from imported Jurassic flint found exclusively in these two graves. Most of flint artefacts form a tight group located next to knees or by the head of the deceased. Among them there are many tools of various function. Other flint tools were found in small heap or rows suggesting their original form such as sickles.

Keywords: graves, grave goods, flint artefacts, usewear studies

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