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The Lake Rajgród micro-region – an outlying area of Bogaczewo culture settlement

Piotr Iwanicki

With its extensions – lakes Krzywe and Bialoe to the west, and lake Dreístwo to the east – lake Rajgród forms the south-eastern margin of the Elk lake district. Its position between the moraine hills of Barłgowo-Miłecko to the north-east, the forest complex of Augustów to the east and the floodplains of the Elk, Jegnizia and Netta rivers to the south and west gives the region of Rajgród lake the character of an enclave. At the same time the area may be easily traversed south-to-north (from the Kolno heights to the Augustów lake district in the north) and towards the south-west, by way of the Elk lake district and the Great Mazurian Lakes district beyond (Kondracki, 1994, p. 73-74).

During the Roman period the region of lake Rajgród formed the south-eastern periphery of Bogaczewo culture, which had its centre in the region of the Great Mazurian lakes. Archaeology of the lake Rajgród micro-region started to be recorded by German researchers in early 1930s when well-known social activists and antiquarians of the Elk district Kreis Lyck – Adolf Pogodz and Franz Kozman – investigated the sites at Romoto (Pogoda, 1934a, p. 93; 1934b, p. 238; 1934c, p. 10; 1934d, p. 69-71), Borzymy (Kozman, 1933a, p. 250; 1933b, p. 78-80) and Spłitki (Kozman, 1935, p. 13-14). The results of their studies were later published in the form of brief notes in regional periodicals.

Across the border, in Poland, the first discoveries were made during the late 1930s. In 1937 Józef Marciniak carried out rescue excavations at Judziuki and Bargłów Dworny site I (Marciniak, 1950, p. 47-75); two years later the cemetery at Netta was discovered during the construction of military defences (Okulicz, 1955, p. 284-303). After World War II archaeological research in the area was taken up only in the 1960s and 70s by Marian Kaczyński. Kaczyński completed the exploration of the site at Bargłów Dworny site I, started by J. Marciniak, excavated the cemeteries at Netta and Podiszewo and carried out a sondage study of settlements at Bargłów Dworny, site II and Netta, site V (Kaczyński, 1976b, p. 475-484; 1981, p. 169-198). The same researcher also identified the cemetery at Broniszówka and settlement site Netta, site II (Kaczyński, 1981, p. 174). During the same period a number of isolated graves were recorded at Woźna Wies (Iwanicki, 2001, p. 89-97) and Dreístwo (Jaskanis, 1968, p. 401-404) and a rescue excavation carried out of the fortified settlement at Rajgród (Jaskanis, 2001, p. 75-157). In late 1980s and 90s the settlement at Tworki Skromkie was discovered (Biter-Wróblewska, 1994, p. 232-233) and several new sites were identified as a result of the Polish Archaeological Record fieldwalking program /AZP/. Of the latter only the site at Rybertyna, site 62 was subsequently excavated.

Despite the described research activity the archaeological record of the culture and settlement shift in region of lake Rajgród is seriously limited. Much of the archaeological material recovered before the war can no longer be traced; many of the features survive in a seriously damaged condition. Of these the most comprehensively investigated is the cemetery at Netta, site 1, lying on its periphery (unpublished materials from the research by M. Kaczyński; PMA/Warsaw State Archaeological Museum/ Collection, inv. no. PMAIV/364, subsequently as PMAIV/364). Even though partly destroyed by war trenches Netta produced over 170 graves dating from the end of phase B2 until phase D (Kaczyński, 1966, p. 79-108; Biter-Wróblewska, 2001, p. 129-138).

Unfortunately the earliest phases of occupation of the

1 So far, eleven PAR (Polish Archaeological Record) areas have been studied in the micro-region of Lake Rajgród, with ca 20 settlements discovered dating from the Roman period. Research by J. Siemaszko, J. Brosowski – Collection of the Regional Museum in Suwałki.
cemetery are documented by a very small number of grave assemblages; this makes it difficult to compare the archaeology registered at Nettà with that of other cemeteries in the region (see Bitner-Wrobłewska, in the present volume). A further 180 or so graves were excavated at Romoty and Sityński, in the western area of micro-region of lake Rairgród (Jaskanî, 1997, p. 219, 328) but the material recovered from these cemeteries was lost during the war. At present it is only possible—based on references in pre-1939 literature—to determine the approximate typology of some of the artefacts recorded at Romoty and Sityński and define the chronology of these cemeteries. A number of smaller cemeteries in the region at Judźki, Podliszewo and Bargłów Dówny, site 1 pose similar problems. None of these sites had been undamaged at the time of their excavation; as a result, only some of the occupation phases at these cemeteries are represented by grave assemblages, the remaining phases are documented only by isolated finds lacking archaeological context. A good example is the site at Podliszewo. Although we know that this grave field was in use during the period from phase A3/B1 until C2/D, its youngest and oldest phase of occupation are documented only by a small number of scattered artefacts recovered from the arable layer; the first chronologically well-defined burials are those datable to the end of phase H2 until phase C2 (Bitner-Wrobłewska, Iwanicki, 2002, p. 105–184).

Next to the larger and smaller cemeteries a number of isolated grave assemblages are also recorded in the micro-region of lake Rairgród, at Dreków (Jaskanî, 1968, p. 401–404; Brzozowski, Szymanitska, 1999, p. 26–31), Wozna (Iwanicki, 2001, 1999–2001, p. 89–97), Bytoryn (Jaskanî, 1977, p. 251) and in the region of the town of Jagórn (Jaskanî, 1970, p. 380–386). Such solitary grave assemblages may represent either the remnants of no longer existing fully destroyed cemeteries or of sites which were not fully explored. Despite their random character they furnish much valuable data to supplement the findings from better investigated cemeteries.

Unfortunately evidence from settlements discovered in the region of interest is of limited use for micro-regional studies as none of these sites were investigated in a satisfactory manner. Out of 21 settlement sites on record only five have been investigated, either by sondage or in the form of rescue excavation: the settlement at Bargłów Dówny, site 2 (Kacyznski, 1976b, p. 477–480; 1998, p. 167–194), Neta, site II (Kacyznski, 1981, p. 174), Rybkózma, site 6 (see footnote 2), the fortified settlement at Rairgród (Jaskanî, 2001, p. 75–157) and at Twaroki Skrociek (Bitner-Wrobłewska, 1994, p. 232–233). Material evidence obtained at settlement sites is sufficient only to determine their general chronological framework with no possibility to identify narrower time segments.

Even with such a modest and far from complete archaeological record it is still possible to trace change at work in the micro-region of lake Rairgród during the Roman and Migration period (Map I). This was attempted for the first time by M. Kaczyński (1966, 1976, 1976a, p. 253–288; 1981, p. 169–190), who proposed to include the settlement micro-region in question in the Augustów group of Sudovian culture he had identified. However more recent research and material evidence obtained on Bogaczowo culture, and especially, progress made on the study of Bogaczowo culture pottery makes it necessary to question M. Kaczyński’s conclusions and view the processes of change around lake Raigród from a slightly different perspective. In the coming section these processes are described during successive and tangible chronological phases.

The first traces of Roman period occupation in the micro-region of lake Rairgród may be dated to phase A3/B1 (Map I); they are represented by a small number of random finds registered at the neighbouring cemeteries at Judźki and Podliszewo. These include a spear with large hooks (Marciniak, 1991, p. 60, PI. XIX:3), a shield grip type J.5, both from Judźki (Jahn, 1916, p. 184; Marciniak, 1950, p. 60, PL. XIX:7) and a buckle with a spike continuing into a trapeze-shaped ferrule, from Podliszewo – (Bitner-Wrobłewska, Iwanicki, 2002, p. 121, PL. XXXV:7).

The next chronological period, corresponding to phases B1 and B2, is documented by a larger number of finds (Map II): quadrangular fire-stones from Judźki (Marciniak, 1950, p. 60, PL. XIX:11) and Bargłów Dówny, site 1 (collection of PMA-I/M/599), a pin type A from grave 67 at Sityński (Jaskanî, 1977, p. 328), eye brooches of the Prasian series from Judźki (Marciniak, 1950, p. 58, PL. XVII:1–3) and Romoty (Pogoda, 1934b, p. 238), finally, a fibula type A 77–80, also from Romoty (Pogoda, 1934a, p. 93; Nowakowski, 1983, footnote 97).

Other finds datable to the same period include spear points with barbs from Judźki (Marciniak, 1950, p. 59, PL. XVIII:10) and Romoty grave 688, and vessels from Romoty (Pogoda, 1934a, p. 93) may probably be assigned to the same chronological time segment.

Pottery discovered inside grave assemblages dating from phases B1 and B2 is typical for Bogaczowo culture (Szymański, 2000, p. 113–144), both in terms of its form (fused-shaped rims, hemispherical or biconical body, poorly defined bases), execution (smoothed upper, roughened lower body), and ornamentation (large multi-partite handles, single engraved line at rim base). Next to the already noted vessel types LB and LC other pottery types include: type IA (Judźki grave 14), type I.D.a (Judźki grave 4) and type ILA bowl (Judźki grave 1), Podliszewo grave 34).

Funerary practices registered in lake Rairgród micro-region are very much the same as those noted in the main area of Bogaczowo culture. During this period (phases
B1–B2) cremated remains were deposited in urns or directly inside the grave pit, which could be round or oval in outline. The grave pits commonly also included the remains of the funerary pyre; it is worth noting that in some cases concentrations of burnt bone or cinerary urns have been found deposited directly in pure sand with no obvious outline of the grave pit. On rare occasions the graves were found inside stone settings, overlain by small pavements or marked with a solitary stone.

It is not entirely clear whether in lake Raigród micro-region urned graves predominated over pit graves during the period in question (B1 and B2). This regularity, observed at Bogaczewo culture cemeteries (Okulicz, 1973, p. 393; Nowakowski, 1983, p. 137), has also been signalled with regard to the grave fields at Sypiki and Romoy (Jaskonis, 1977, p. 319, 328). But of this we may never be certain given the seriously impaired record available on these two sites. Other cemeteries in the micro-region of lake Raigród have produced a very modest number of assemblages datable to phases B1 and B2, urned and pit graves alike (cf. Podlisewo graves 10A and 10C – Bitner-Wob weldska, Iwanicki, 2002, p. 110–111, PL IX, XI, Jedliński grave 3AI – Marciniak, 1950, p. 50, fig. 4).

Phase B2C1–C1a is represented by a much richer body of evidence (Map 1D). The period was one of intensive development of Bogaczewo culture and formation of new settlement concentrations on its northern and eastern peripheries, which subsequently gave rise to Sudovian culture (Kaczyński, 1981, p. 261–266; Nowakowski, 1983, p. 183–188). The described settlement processes, the emergence of the Sowatki concentration in particular are reflected in archaeological material recorded in the lake Raigród micro-region. During phases B2C1–C1a settlement spread north–eastward, to the area of Bargłów-Miłośevo height, and south-eastward, to the area around lake Dreztowo. These processes are not fully tangible in archaeological material. Based on available evidence we may suppose that during this period or even slightly earlier, the cemeteries at Nett, site 1 and Bargłów Dwory, site 1 were established, and perhaps also the settlements lying in their vicinity.

A chronology pre-dating phase B2C1–C1a of both these cemeteries is indicated by the chronology of grave 81AI at Nett, site 1 (Bitner-Wolecławski, 2001, p. 113) and a random find of a quartize free-stone recovered at Bargłów Dwory, site 1 (Marciniak, 1998, footnote 4).

(Bargłów Dwory, site 2 – Kaczyński, 1998, p. 176; Nett, site V – Kaczyński, 1976b, p. 451–452). The number of isolated graves registered at Wózna Wiel (Iwanicki, 2001, p. 93) and Dreztowo (Borowski, Szymański, 1999, p. 29) also belong in the same period.

This dating is supported by grave inventories which include the following metal dress fastenings typical for Bogaczewo culture during phases B2C1–C1a (Nowakowski, 1983, p. 184–185): the Mazurian variant of three-comb brooches Sypiki, grave 26 (Jaskonis, 1977, p. 328) and Bargłów Dwory, site 1, grave 7 (Marciniak, 1950, p. 64, PI. XXII:6), pin Nikutowo variant, Nett, grave 74 (unpublished materials from research of M. Kaczyński, Collection PMA/IV/364). Other ornaments include wrist-band (Marchuetamandab) bracelets with narrow terminals, Bargłów Dwory, grave 4s (Marciniak, 1950, p. 64, PI. XXI:3, 4); some pieces are ornamented with emal champerle: a pendant from Podlisewo, grave 14 (Bitner-Wolecławski, Iwanicki, 2002, p. 111–112, PI. XIII:1), horseshoe brooches from Bargłów Dwory, site 1, grave 4s (Marciniak, 1950, p. 64, PI. XXI:5) and Nett, grave 81A (Bitner-Wolecławski, 2001, p. 129). In this group of finds we may also include a pin type Sowajczia and a square-framed buckle with a double spike, from Bargłów Dwory, site 1, graves 18 and 20 (Kaczyński, 1976a, fig. 3, 8, 9), fragments of necklaces with conical terminals from Podlisewo, grave 9 and 20 (Bitner-Wolecławski, Iwanicki, 2002, p. 110, 114, PI. X, XI, XXI:1) and battle axes with a straight blade registered for the first time during this period, from Jedliński, grave 12a and Bargłów Dwory, site 1, grave 4b (Marciniak, 1950, p. 55, 64, PI. XV:5, XXI:7).

Pottery from phase B2C1–C1a indicates a continuation of strong ties with the centre of Bogaczewo culture. Next to forms type LB, ID and IA registered earlier we find miniature vessels of group VII, cups type Sowajczia and similar forms without handles (type IVC – cf. Bitner-Wolecławski, Iwanicki, 2002, p. 133), and forms representative of type IVB. A new form probably introduced during the same phase is a bowl variant with a well-defined high-set shoulder. Another new element in pottery are vertical cordons ornamented by notching, placed in the upper body of the vessel. This form of ornamentation was derived from multi-partite handles and is noted outside the micro-region of lake Raigród only on a vessel recovered from grave 5 at Prachróđ (Kłewek, 2002, p. 10, PI. IX:2) and on a potsherd from the mound of barrow 14 at Sowajczia (Antoniewicz et al., 1956, p. 316, PI. XXXI:4).
Burials practices were also affected by change. During phase II/C1-C2a urned graves, including also deposits inside stone settings, are less common, being outnumbered by pit graves, some of which become quite large. Moreover, impact of the Suwałki group of Sudovian culture is indicated by the introduction of burials having rectangular-shaped grave pits. Another novel element is the introduction – next to vessels from group I and II – of fragments of accessory vessels, usually cups, more rarely miniatures, some of which may bear traces of fire burning and in contrast to group I show more careful execution and firing.

Phase C1b-C2 is represented mostly by the material from the cemetery at Netta, site I, and by a handful of isolated grave assemblages and random finds (Map IV). Absence of material from this phase at cemeteries at Bargłów Dworný, site I, Judziki, Romytoy and Sypiki is probably due to the substantial degree of destruction of cemeteries at Bargłów Dworný and Judziki and the probably incomplete investigation of Romytoy and Sypiki. This is true in particular of the cemetery at Sypiki, which is known to have included later graves, dated to the Migration period (Jaskanis, 1977, p. 328).

Material from the phase in question recovered in the micro-region of lake Raigrodz includes wrist-band Manischettermannband bracelets with broad terminals from Netta, site I, grave 3 (Kaczyński, 1964, p. 94, fig. 9:12, 14) and another such specimen lacking archaeological context discovered close to the town of Raigrodz (Jaskanis, 1970, p. 386–387, fig. 1); there is also a large series of finds from the cemetery at Netta: crossbow tendifr brooches types A.162 (e.g. grave 78 – Kaczyński, 1966, p. 94, fig. 5) and A.167, richly ornamented with notched wire hoops (e.g. grave 31 – Kaczyński, 1966, p. 94, fig. 9:13), neck rings with notched wire discs (e.g. grave 78 – Kaczyński et al., 1987, p. 105, fig. 266), a hemispherical shield boss and lastly, type C pits (e.g. grave 79 – Kaczyński, 1966, p. 94, fig. 11 an. 93A – Collection PMA/IV/364).

In ceramic material during phase C1b-C2 we see the decline of gently profiled vessel forms, type Szwajcaria and IVC bowls and type II A bowls; they are replaced by new forms such as angular bowls and vases (Podliszewo, grave 4 and 15 – Bitner- Wróblewska, Iwanicki, 2002, p. 105, fig. 3, XVI:19; Netta, site I, grave 138A, 150 – Collection PMA/IV/364) and vessels having a small pedestal foot (Woźna Wieś, grave 1 – Iwanicki, 2001, p. 90, fig. 3; Netta, site I, grave 26 – Kaczyński, 1966, p. 96, fig. 10). Degenerated forms of group I.B and I.C continue in evidence (Podliszewo, grave 15 – Bitner-Wróblewska, Iwanicki, 2002, p. 112, Pl. XVI:20) this is also true of group I.E vessels (Netta, site I, grave 78 and 79 – Kaczyński, 1966, p. 96, fig. 5, 11). Cemeteries at Podliszewo (grave 7 and 15 – Bitner-Wróblewska, Iwanicki, 2002, p. 109, 112, Pl. IV/8, XVII:29) and Netta, site I (e.g. grave 142, 150 – Collection PMA/IV/364) have produced group II B vessels which are well represented in Bogaczewo culture material during the Late Roman period (Szymański, 2000, p. 119–120).

The funerary practice appears to have been more stable. Grave pits continue to be oval and square-shaped. Perhaps the ratio of pit graves to urned graves has levelled out. The practice of depositing several accessory vessels appears to be on its way out. A new striking development during this phase (C1b-C2) was the introduction of barrow-like burials, recalling in construction similar structures so widespread in Sudovian culture. Two of these barrows are recorded so far – at Podliszewo, grave 15 (Bitner-Wróblewska, Iwanicki, 2002, p. 112, Pl. XIV: XV) and Netta, site I, barrow II (Kaczyński, 1981, p. 188).

Although somewhat different from their Suwałki models in size and construction they are an important indication of the growing impact of Sudovian culture on the region of interest.

The situation in the lake Raigrodz micro-region at the close of the Late Roman and the Migration period is still insufficiently understood, due to the patchy archaeological record (Map V). Most of the material dated to this period comes from Netta, site I, a handful of finds and grave assemblages are also recorded at Sypiki and Podliszewo. Features containing Late Roman/Migration period pottery were also recorded at the settlements at Rybcaznia, site 6 and Zwołki Skrockie. A small number of postherts dated to the Migration period was also discovered in the destroyed culture layer at the fortified settlement at Raigrodz.

Among metal finds from the period in question we find a diversity of brooches, a Blecibol sheet specimen from Netta, site I, barrow I, grave 57 (Kaczyński, 1966, p. 103, Pl. II:6), specimens resembling type A.170 with a sheet hook from Podliszewo (Bitner-Wróblewska, Iwanicki, 2002, p. 121, Pl. XXXV:1), and another,
suggest that the described settlement concentration may be associated with Bogaczewo culture. It shows especially close links with sites found in the north-eastern portion of Bogaczewo culture territory. Moreover, material from this early period reflects evident influence from Przeworsk culture which presumably were entering the area from the area of the Kozło heights. This impact is expressed by among others, the influx of finds characteristic for the Przeworsk culture (the spur type J.6, shield grip type J.6, spear points with barbs, quartzite fire-stones, a brooch with spike continuing into the ferrule of Nowakowski, 1949, p. 374) and their imitations (bracelets with thickened bevelled terminals). Development of Bogaczewo culture in phase B2C1–C1a is reflected in the micro-region of lake Raigrod also by the rise of new sites in its eastern reaches. Growing impact of the Szwajcar settlement concentration during the Late Roman paralleled by the decline of Bogaczewo culture reflected change in cultural make up of the described settlement micro-region. It is worth noting at the same time that changes in pottery and burial practices reflect evolution of Bogaczewo models from an earlier period accompanied by new solutions proper to Bogaczewo culture of the Late Roman period. Only the settlement crisis registered during the Migration period in Mazuria (Nowakowski, 1983, p. 190–191) resulted in a wider scale incorporation of the micro-region around Lake Raigrod into Sudovian culture. But this does not seem to have been complete. This is indicated by the continuation next to barrow burials of flat multiple burials, and by the continuation of sharply profiled vessels in forms from the preceding phase. Finally, it is worth recalling that the conclusions presented here require further verification which is possible at the present stage only with the recovery of new material evidence. It is to be hoped that as a result of further enquiries we will be able to understand better the process of formation of the powerful tribe of Poleskoie in the region of lake Raigrod and on the river Elke, known from medieval written sources (Nalepa, 1996, p. 47–49).

Translated by Anna Kunecka

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RAJGRODO EZERO MIKROREGIONAS – BOGAČEVO KULTUROS GYVENVIECIŲ PERIFERIJA

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Santrasku


būtinų (V. 46 tarpinis, J. 6 tarpinis dėmesingus, irigalvius su eilučiomis, kvarco stiklovių, sagis nupuolingus ir paprastai pasižiūrėti. Tačiau reikia pabėgti, kad keramikos formos ir lidosonos pamininkai buvo Bogačevo

kultūros evoliucijos padarinys, kuris priimtum būdingos vėlėjanti Bogačevo kultūros reikšmus. Tik tų tarpukario periodo epochos gyvenvietės kritėjimą skirtų istorinio regiono (Nowakowski, 1983, p. 190-191) sukietijęs plėtosis Rajgrodo ezero mikro-

regiono atviruką iš šiaurės kultūros rūtų. Tačiau, atrodo, taškų įvairiakojis nesuvokiant visiškai – šaltų pilkapų šiliska plaktiniai kapinių, kuris prastai priskirtas nuo formos. Gminiaus klausimas, reikia tikėtis, padės išsaugoti naujų archeologinių objektų tyriminei rajainergiei Bogačevo ezero

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