Is it possible to define an eastern group of the Funnel Beaker Culture today?

Archaeological cultures and groups are most often defined as taxons in systematics of materials; however, in many cases this does not apply to organization of all sources, but only to organization of the styles of pottery (L. Czerniak 1989, p. 33; S. Kukawka 1997, p. 16) – at least this is the case with a majority of units identified in the Neolithic period. Consequently, the Funnel Beaker Culture (FBC) is a unit that emerged as a result of an attempt at a temporal and spatial alignment of specific types of pottery vessels based on their different stylistic characteristics. It is forms of vessels and their decorations that were the basic sources based on which the aforementioned group was identified and based on which territorial and chronological divisions have been and are still being made within it (D. Jankowska 1980, p. 28; S. Kukawka 2010b, pp. 96, 109); consequently the eastern group of the FBC is a pottery-stylistic concept. As D. Jankowska noticed, the division of the FBC “into large territorial groups largely has the characteristics of a convention. This is manifested among others in [...] the well known lack of overlap of the outreach of individual groups and the presence of some cultural elements (e.g. related to funeral customs and flint processing)” (D. Jankowska 1980, pp. 11–12; cf. K. Jaźdżewski 1936, p. 272; S. Kukawka 1997, pp. 16–17). Nevertheless, the author described the characteristics of the diagnostic properties of the FBC from the area of the Lowland, such as settlements, funeral rites, and production of flint tools “within the boundaries of the northern and eastern group” (D. Jankowska 1980, pp. 13–71). Consequently, even if we are aware of the flaws of the cultural divisions made based on such a limited number of sources, usually we are unable to stop using them and start thinking in other ways. It turns out that “pottery” taxons that are identified as a result of such “conventional” divisions, which are based on differences in the style of pottery, are later treated as real socio-cultural commu-
nities, perhaps even ethnic communities, that can be discussed in ideological and economic terms (L. Czerniak 1989, p. 33).

I am often inclined to use this way of thinking and, in order to present some justification, I would like to add that in my opinion the style of pottery encodes a certain scope of information (symbols and signs) that are understandable to its makers and direct users, which consequently are socially recognizable meanings. Pottery, or its spatial distribution, can reflect the existence of a certain type of communicational, socio-political, ideological, religious, economic, or ethnic community, may result from presence of certain local alliances or conflicts, or e.g. reflect demand for specific goods, because repeatability in different locations of complex stylistic characteristics, in particular ornaments, could not be accidental and has to be the result of circulation of information within specific boundaries created as a result of a specific factor that integrates the community and isolates it from other similar groups (L. Czerniak 1989, pp. 43–44, 46). If so, the eastern group that was identified based on “ceramic” criteria can be treated as a specific real system (and simultaneously a subsystem within the entire FBC), even though certainly we are unable to tell what caused its emergence and gave it its specific shape.

The author of the first territorial division within the unit that was later referred to as FBC was G. Kossinna who compared the three main types of vessels: funnel beakers, flanged flasks, and amphoras, and divided them into four territorial groups: northern, western, southern, and eastern (which included all artifacts found to the east of the Oder River, all the way to the Lublin region of Poland; this general division is still in use nowadays. In the case of those types of vessels, of key importance were the differences between the beakers, and the differences between flanged flasks were only of auxiliary importance. On the other hand, the comparison of the amphoras was partly incomplete and partly erroneous (G. Kossinna, p. 38, Tab. I, VII; K. Jażdżewski 1936, p. 2). Consequently, the notion of the eastern group was originally associated only with the dispersion of a specific variant of only one type of vessel: the funnel beaker. This is why L. Czerniak and A. Kośko wrote in 1993 that “the FBC seen as a ‘culture’ was the product of the ‘leading types’ method and – looking deeper – constituted a manifestation of helplessness of archaeologists in times when mostly ‘loose’ individual vessels were available and dating consisted in building the largest possible spatial schemes of affiliation of similarity of forms” (L. Czerniak, A. Kośko 1993, p. 98).

In Poland, the first researcher who worked on this topic was L. Kozłowski who, within the materials of the eastern group, identified funnel bowls in Wielkopolska and Silesia. Those types of vessels have become the distinguishing mark of the Wielkopolska and Małopolska Cultures. The latter, which supposedly emerged as a result of Silesian and Moravian influences with “Silesian type bowls”, was in fact an expansion of the range of the southern group identified by G. Kossinna, into the areas of Małopolska, the Lublin Region, and Volhynia (L. Kozłowski 1921, pp. 20–21; 1924, pp. 28, 60, 68, tabl. II; K. Jażdżewski 1936, pp. 3); as a result, the area of the
eastern group was decreased by those regions. In 1932, K. Jażdżewski expressed his support for this proposition and stated that the border between the eastern group and the southern group in the Lublin Region should run along the Wieprz River (K. Jażdżewski 1932, p. 100, Karte 1). In the same publication, the bases were presented for the proposed identification within the eastern group of two territorial variants: the “western-central-Polish” variant and the “Pomerania-Kujawy” variant, as well as two chronological phases (K. Jażdżewski 1932, pp. 96–100, Karte 1–2).

A little later, K. Jażdżewski published his famous monograph on the FBC (K. Jażdżewski 1936), which brought a number of findings, some of which are still valid today. He also presented detailed characteristics of the eastern group including the Baltic coast areas with transient characteristics between the eastern and northern groups (K. Jażdżewski 1932, pp. 89–91; 1936, p. 229), as well as the areas where the eastern and southern groups overlapped. K. Jażdżewski corrected the borders between the two latter groups again to the disadvantage of the eastern group: on the right bank of Vistula, he moved it from the line of the Wieprz River to the Narew River, on the left bank – from the northern border of the loess plateaus to the Pilica River and to the bend in the Warta River in the vicinity of Radomsko; on the other hand, its extent was enlarged all the way to the lower course of the Niemen River (K. Jażdżewski 1936, p. 6, 228, map 1). The chronological division of the eastern group into the Wiórek and Luboń phases, despite turning out to be appropriate, was based on a very fragile foundation and on the doubtful assumption that the Jutland materials were older and, additionally, on collections of pottery coming from settlements of which “a very large majority was dune settlements” K. Jażdżewski 1936, pp. 231–235).

Since the publication of K. Jażdżewski’s work, it should not be very difficult to distinguish the Wiórek and Luboń materials but still... In 2009, two great experts in the Neolithic period, A. Kulczycka-Leciejewiczowa and E. Noworyta, published materials from the settlement in the Polwica 4-Skrzypnik 8 site in the Oława District, which included pieces of pottery decorated in a way that differed from other FBC pottery from that site: “Of note are fragments of several beakers that are exceptionally carefully decorated on the outer and inner side of the edge (fig. 43: 9; 44; 49: 6; 58: 2, 10), similar to pottery with analogous ornaments, most often found in the eastern group, especially in its late Luboń phase”; and: “Another important thing was that this type of ornament [i.e. one made with a stamp – comment by J.W.] was present below the edge of the opening of the vessel not only on the outer but also on the inner side. This demonstrates influence of the decoration style typical of the eastern group of the Funnel Beaker Culture, which was particularly developed in the later (Luboń) phase” (A. Kulczycka-Leciejewiczowa, E. Noworyta 2009, pp. 77, 82). Despite such a clear opinion of the authors, the ornamentation of those beakers is typical of decorations associated with later sections of the Wiórek phase.

The origins of the eastern group have always been associated with the north. This was clearly stated by K. Jażdżewski in the introduction to his publication: “The contact with the sea in Jutland, the country of origin of the culture discussed herein
It was certainly the sea that made those people daring colonizers who, once they left their little cradle, spread widely in large swaths of Central Europe” (K. Jaźdżewski 1936, p. 2). K. Jaźdżewski used this opinion as a basis for dating the two groups of materials that he identified in the Wielkopolska region: “Because adequate – in our opinion – arguments support the older age of the northern group of the Funnel Beaker Culture compared to the eastern group, it was necessary to identify as older the group that was typologically closer to the northern group” (K. Jaźdżewski 1936, pp. 231–232). Because the origins of the FBC, in a crystallized form, can be found in Jutland and it is from there that it spread in the corridor grave period to large swaths of Central Europe,” “the period of existence of the eastern group extends over the entire corridor grave period and a part of the chest grave period” (K. Jaźdżewski 1936, pp. 320–321). Thus, it can be said that K. Jaźdżewski put an equal sign between the arrival of colonizers from Jutland into the Polish Lowland and the emergence of the eastern group.

Problems started later when Carl J. Becker identified pottery in the areas of the eastern group that was older than the Wiórek phase, which he considered to be a part of the so-called continental phase AB (C. J. Becker 1947). Soon, new materials of this type were even discovered in Sarnowo (W. Chmielewski 1952, pp. 35, 37). Identification of the AB phase as the oldest form of the FBC in the territory of Poland was gradually acknowledged by different researchers (K. Jaźdżewski 1961, pp. 83–84; T. Wiślański 1964, pp. 86–90), and its complete acceptance was confirmed by naming it the Sarnowo phase (J. Kostrzewski et al. 1965, p. 82). On this occasion, the need was identified to verify the old findings related to the seniority of the northern group and its genetic relations to the Wiórek phase (K. Jaźdżewski 1961, p. 79; J. Kostrzewski et al. 1965, pp. 79–80). J. Kowalczyk concluded that since C. J. Becker’s proposition that the northern group is younger than the areas located further south was accepted, the arguments that support the relations between the style of the Wiórek phase and the northern group now have a reverse effect: the Luboń phase should be considered as older because it does not show such a relationship (J. Kowalczyk 1969, p. 36).

The forms of vessels considered to be a part of the continental AB phase were so different from forms typical of the eastern phase that two questions arose and had to be answered: What were the relationships between the AB phase and the later materials? and How and when did the eastern group emerge? Given the importance and the location of this unit within the FBC, it is surprising that those questions were asked so rarely and by so few researchers.

The range of presence of materials of the continental AB phase identified by C. J. Becker is significantly larger than the area occupied by the eastern group; as a result, they cannot be considered as identical. L. Gabałówna even opposed calling the AB phase the Sarnowo phase and never used that term herself (L. Gabałówna 1968, pp. 140–141; 1969a, p. 51; 1969b, pp. 52, 54; 1970b, p. 79; 1972, pp. 249–250) because “despite the large size of the territory where artifacts of the Funnel Beaker Culture older than the time horizon of, among others, the Wiórek phase are found, the local
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Is it possible to define an eastern group of the Funnel Beaker Culture today? Differences among them are for now not sufficiently distinct” (L. Gabałówna 1968, p. 140). One may believe that she considered the start of the eastern group to be the period when the so-far uniform stylistic image of the FBC pottery began to differentiate and when the early eastern group emerged from it, in the form of the Pikutowo phase, i.e. the early Wiórek phase (L. Gabałówna 1968, p. 144; 1970a, p. 103; 1972, pp. 249–250).

T. Wiślański shared this opinion and stated that the commonly adopted division into groups, including the earlier group, refers to the period of full development of the FBC and not to its oldest stages, because the culture of the Sarnowo phase was fairly uniform and its spatial variation was not so advanced to justify identification of clear local groups. The process of spatial variation of the FBC became more intensive in the period corresponding to the Pikutowo phase when, according to T. Wiślański, the basic territorial groups were finally formed (T. Wiślański 1979, pp. 175, 184, 200). D. Jankowska, too, believed that the origins of the eastern group dated back to phase II, because the cultural elements of phase I (AB) have a much broader range and that phase III (Wiórek) was already a period of domination of the FBC in the Lowland and of gradual differentiation of that group, because the cultural image of the Wiórek phase was not uniform (D. Jankowska 1980, p. 70).

The broadest discussion about the emergence of the eastern group was presented by A. Kośko who moved its origin into the Wiórek phase. He stated that the assumption of the existence of a cultural link, which is evident in the presence of specific pottery styles, “reflected in the notion of the so-called eastern group, appears to be slowly becoming outdated,” because even after the spatial range of presence of Wiórek – Luboń styles is restricted to the large valley zone of the Lowland, it is difficult, “within such a delimited cultural group (i.e. by preserving the older ‘eastern’ group name), to elaborate a uniform chronological systematics,” especially for the late beaker horizon of the FBC. This is why he identified in this area four regions with “different rhythms of the stylistic development of pottery”: Eastern- and Central-Kujawy, Northern-Wielkopolska, and Lower-Oder regions (A. Kośko 19871, p. 62, tab. 7). Such regions were formed gradually. First, the so-called Central-European area of adaptation of para-ribbon culture model, associated with the FBC system, broke into two segments: the old-upland segment and the lowland segment (A. Kośko 1981a, pp. 13, 18), and then within the latter – as a result of influence/migration from the lake district-coastal zone of the northern drainage basin of the Elbe River – a new subsystem of the FBC was formed: the eastern group. Its formation, from the point of view of the source-study, was visible as “adaptation of Northern-Elbe cultural characteristics” that determined the start of the IIB phase (A. Kośko 1981a, pp. 66–68). As a result, the eastern group was defined by this researcher as the “‘Oder boundary’ of the ‘Elbe-Jutland inspiration circle’” (A. Kośko 1988a, p. 153). The second factor that causes increase of local differences in the development of individual parts of the

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1 This article was submitted for publication in 1977 but was published only in 1987 without any essential modifications of the text (A. Kośko 1987, pp. 35, note *).
ecumene of the eastern group was the influences of old farming centers of Małopolska. Consequently, the emergence in the eastern group of the four aforementioned central segments, each of which was an agglomeration of highlighted settlement and stylistic separation (stylistic region), was the result of uneven influence of cultural patterns from Northern-Elbe areas, on the one hand, and from Małopolska, on the other hand (A. Kośko 1981a, pp. 20, 67–68, fig. 14). In a sense, this could be considered as a support for the opinion of K. Jaźdżewski who defined the eastern group as the “connector between the northern group and the southern group” (K. Jaźdżewski 1936, p. 230). The third factor that differentiated the eastern group of the FBC was communities of the Trypole Culture, which together formed the so-called Mątwy group (A. Kośko 1981a, pp. 20–21; 1988a, pp. 106–114).

This concept of emergence and development of the eastern group was found to be so successful that it was repeated, basically without any changes, ten years later in the article by L. Czerniak, L. Domańska, A. Kośko, and D. Prinke (A. Kośko 1981, fig. 14; L. Czerniak et al. 1991, fig. 1), even though even earlier the time of commencement of formation of the eastern group under the influence of the Elbe culture-forming centers was moved to phase IIIA, with identification in the northern part of Kujawy of the so-called Wiórek – Jezuicka Struga style (D. Prinke 1988, pp. 100–102), also referred to as Toruń – Mokre type materials (S. Kukawka 1997, pp. 72–75; 2001, p. 77; 2010b, p. 154). From the standpoint of source studies, this process is manifested in the trend to put ornaments on the bodies of vessels, as well as in adaptation of such motives as vertical engraved lines, rung ladders, and impressions of multi-tooth combs. However, according to S. Kukawka, those modifications of ornaments must be associated with completely different direction of influence – from the comb pottery culture (S. Kukawka 2001, p. 77, fig. 1; 2010b, p. 112). The next correction of the start of the eastern group resulted in the change of their times to the turn of phases IIB and IIIA (phase IIB/IIIA-IIIA), based on two collections of pottery (of negligible quantity) with decorative characteristics of the Wiórek – Jezuicka Struga style (A. Kośko, A. Przybył 2004, p. 264, fig. 134: B–C).

Importantly, within that style there is no impressed zigzag motive that so far has been considered as a determinant of the start of phase IIIA. Therefore, it was assumed that in that period there were two parallel decorative trends that merged only in phase IIIB and perhaps IIIIC. (A. Kośko 1988b, p. 153; D. Prinke 1988, pp. 99–102; D. Prinke, M. Szmyt 1990, p. 91): the “classic” phase IIIA with the style of the Wietrzychowice type (I. Jadczykowa 1970) and the Wiórek – Jezuicka Struga style. Soon, those two trends were joined by a third trend, also a Kujawy trend, with a zigzag-less style of the Łojewo type, which is relatively strongly associated with Małopolska (M. Szmyt 1992, p. 87; L. Czerniak, A. Kośko 1993, p. 117).

However, the multitrack nature of the style in the large-valley FBC is much older. The taxonomy scheme, proposed by S. Rzepecki, by the so-called central-Neolithic FBC, in whose development he used the apparently more cohesive statistical methods, suggests that the start of the polylinearism of the development of the group
in question can be seen as early as in the younger part of the Sarnowo phase. The early section of the development of the FBC (phases I-IIIA) was divided into five groups, partly synchronized with each other, and some of them additionally into phases (S. Rzepecki 2004, p. 38–59, fig. 39). As a result, it turns out that in the same period of approx. 4000–3800 BC in Kujawy there could be two neighboring groups that, due to their style, were previously considered as belonging to phases I to IIIA, and consequently the differences between them are not a function of time but a result of belonging to different development streams that were due to traditions (polygenicity) and position in the information exchange network.

However, the fact that the eastern group is not monolithic has been known for a long time. Even K. Jażdżewski identified two territorial variants in this group (K. Jażdżewski 1932, pp. 96–100, Karte 1–2), even though he did it based only on certain differences in ornamentation of only one type of vessels – funnel beakers (K. Jażdżewski 1936, pp. 6, 234–237). In the areas located to the south of the Baltic Sea, he also identified the Gingst, Moltzow, and Zarrenthin (currently Zarrenthin am Schaalsee) subgroups, in an effort to organize material with transient characteristics between the eastern group and the northern group (K. Jażdżewski 1932, pp. 89–91; 1936, pp. 229). Later, in the areas of the eastern group, a number of local units was identified, such as the Radziejów, Mrowino, and Ustowo late-Luboń groups, such as the Separowo early-Luboń group, the Chelmno and Mątwy group associated with the sub-Neolithic influences, such as the Waltersdorf, lower-Oder group/subgroup, and the Łupawa group that demonstrate contacts with the lower-Elbe zone. I mentioned the Łupawa group as the last one deliberately because it was the only group that did not emerge from gradual differentiation of a part of a population group as a result of intensive impulses resulting from more or less culturally different exogenous environments.

A set of diagnostic properties of the Łupawa group does not correspond either to the northern group or to the eastern group and those characteristics of the group that have analogies in one of them are present in Łupawa in different layouts that do not conform to their cultural models (D. Jankowska 1980, p. 152). Therefore the groups in question, depending on the assumptions made, can be considered as a segment of the northern or eastern part of the FBC (J. Wierzbicki 1999, p. 11).

The cultural patterns brought to Łupawa by the Elbe settlers became a canon that was sanctified by tradition and memory of common origins. Therefore, the changes that took place never violated the basic rules for production and ornamentation of pottery. Funnel beakers were decorated with vertical lines that were engraved even when the custom disappeared in the original areas of the northern group several centuries earlier (J. Wierzbicki 1999, p. 166). However, the more and more intensive contacts between the coastal zone and the large-valley zone of the Lowland caused gradual inclusion of the Łupawa group in the broadly-defined eastern group of the FBC (J. Wierzbicki 1999, pp. 246–247). Stylistic elements that are genetically associated with the northern group are definitely dominant in all phases of development of
the Łupawa group, but they are living fossils, which makes it possible to date pottery materials based on appearing new decorative motives originating in Wielkopolska and Kujawy.

The increasing regional differences within the eastern group resulted in an increased popularity of the opinion that the reason for the disappearance of this group was the complex processes of disintegration of that system, associated with the formation of new models of Neolithic culture, influence of other lowland populations and Eneolithic communities from the upland zone. However, this decline took place probably in areas located outside of the main development centers – in some areas most likely at the end of phase IIIC (A. Kośko 1981a, p. 70–71) which is dated at approx. 3250/3200 BC (A. Kośko 1981a, p. 70; L. Czerniak 1994, fig. 2, J. Czebreszuk et al. 2000, fig. 1; M. Szmyt 2013, fig. 1.33), or even as late as in 2900 BC (J. Czebreszuk, A. Kośko 2000, fig. 8; M. Szmyt 2008, fig. 6) or 2800/2700 BC (A. Kośko 1991, p. 27).

The gradual disappearance of the eastern group had, as all signs indicate, many aspects. In the area of the so-called central segments, such as the Central-Kujawy, Lower-Oder, and Northern-Wielkopolska segment, as a result of badenization, more or less syncretic Radziejów, Ustowo, and Mrowino groups were formed. However, eneolithization also affected only a part of the population of the eastern group and did not even affect the entire Kujawy region (A. Kośko 1981a, pp. 19, 62, 70–71; 1988b, p. 168). However, although this process was spatially limited, a much important role in the disappearance of the eastern group was most likely played by the Globular Amphora Culture (GAC) population (T. Wiślański 1979, p. 197; A. Kośko 1981a, pp. 71). It appears that communities of the Radziejów group, which finally disappeared in about 2350 BC (J. Czebreszuk, A. Kośko 2000, fig. 8; J. Czebreszuk et al. 2000, fig. 1; M. Szmyt 2008, fig. 6.33; 2013, fig. 1.33), were gradually assimilated by the Globular Amphora Culture, which took over their traditions of contacts with the Baden groups, which is confirmed in the sources by appearance in it of Bošac elements which were absent in the FBC (A. Kośko 1988b, p. 169; 1996, pp. 99–101).

Another reason for the disappearance of the large-valley part of the system of the eastern group was the influence of new colonizers from the Jutland-lower-Elbe center, which represented the Single Grave Culture, which resulted in formation, along the parallel section of central Warta of the zone of active adaptation of cord characteristics, the so-called epibeaker horizon (A. Kośko 1981a, p. 51; 1988b, p. 157). Still different were the reasons for the decline of the Łupawa group that was located peripherally, away from communication routes. Its final chord was most likely the influx of new ideas associated with the population of the Iwno Culture, even though the influence of the Iwno Culture on the Łupawa group was very superficial and limited (J. Wierzbicki 1999, p. 161, 175–176, 251–252, tab. 15). The main force that inspired the extensive influence of the Iwno Culture was most likely economic contacts associated with acquisition and distribution of amber between the population of that group and late Neolithic communities from the lower Vistula basin (A. Kośko 1979, p. 183; 1991, p. 35).
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A moment ago I presented a brief description of the eastern group, with all its differences in space and time. I did this in order to be able to emphasize that all those groups and subgroups (Chełmno, lower-Oder, Łupawa, Mątwy, Mrowino, Radziejów, Separowo, and Ustowo) I consider to be parts of a single larger organism, namely the eastern group. In my opinion, some of those local groups, e.g. the Mątwy or Radziejów groups, may not be considered as equal parts of the FBC, even though this is occasionally done (cf. e.g. A. Kośko 2000a; A. Kośko, A. Przybył 2004, p. 264). Therefore, in order to avoid any misunderstanding, I believe that all those units should be consequently referred to as subgroups, because otherwise the eastern group should be defined using the new term of “subgroup.”

Individual central segments of the eastern group are the four segments identified by A. Kośko (the Eastern-Kujawy segment, the Central-Kujawy segment, the Northern-Wielkopolska segment, and the Lower-Oder segment, with at least two additional segments: the Chełmno segment and the Łupawa segment) that lived at their own pace and process, often for a very long time, the older elements associated with their genetic roots because each of them was characterized by greater or smaller isolationism. However, during their existence, such communities absorbed many characteristics of cultural environments in which they developed and with which they made contacts and, as a result, they acquired many individual characteristics. However, the best proof that all those communities belonged to one community, which has for nearly 100 years been referred to as the eastern group, is that the common elements, which can be seen in the sources, e.g. in the identical decorative patterns or imported pottery, which – transmitted mostly through segments of the Central-Kujawy and Northern-Wielkopolska segments (A. Kośko 1981a, p. 69), circulated in the broad areas of the Lowland without which the stylistic dating of certain segments would not be possible. Individual local groups, even as unique as the Chełmno group or the Łupawa group, were never isolated and their communities were not excluded from the information circulation network with other groups of the FBC (S. Kukawka 2001, p. 81).

Based on the above comments, one may try to formulate an answer to the question stated in the title: Is it possible to define an eastern group of the Funnel Beaker Culture today? I believe that based on the arguments presented in this article, the answer to this question cannot be affirmative. Even though, as S. Kukawka once said, “the FBC identified and recognized by European archaeologists does not meet the requirements of the definition of an archaeological culture, which means that it is not one. Many identified cultures, not only from the Neolithic period, do not meet such requirements (S. Kukawka 1997, p. 14). I personally believe that it is not a problem of the FBC or any other archaeological culture, but rather a problem of the definition. There are terms that are hard to define and cannot be comprised in a nice and clear formula, such as for example art or culture, in the broad sense of the words, which are still fairly well understood by all people. I believe that the situation is similar with the term “archaeological culture/group” among a majority of archaeologists.
However, I can agree with S. Kukawka who said that “identification of archaeological cultures is a form of global organization of archaeological sources according to different subjective principles that do not have a common rule or definition” (S. Kukawka 1997, p. 15). This is why K. Jażdżewski described the FBC, from the point of view of pottery, as “an assembly of forms that initially consisted only of a funnel beaker, a flanged flask, an amphora, a jar, and a two-handle vessel similar to an amphora” (K. Jażdżewski 1936, p. 222), while T. Wiślański described it as a central-European variant of a Neolithic community that was created as a result of centuries-long relations between the settlers of the younger Danube cultures and the Mesolithic hunter-fishermen-gatherer peoples (T. Wiślański 1973, pp. 114–117; 1979, pp. 165, 168); the opinion of W. Chmielewski about this topic is similar (W. Chmielewski 1952, p. 38).

The approach of L. Czerniak and A. Kośko (1993, pp. 94–99) to this topic was different. In their opinion, “the assembly of characteristics defined as the FBC must – in our opinion – be considered by differentiating two levels: a “mesoregional” level and a “Paneuropean” level. On the first level, the term FBC refers to a real (in the ethnographic sense) socio-cultural community, i.e. a group that has, among others, a sense of common origin and strangeness in relation to other groups. On the second level, the term FBC means only a system of circulation of cultural information with a specific range (among others natural patency)” (L. Czerniak, A. Kośko 1993, p. 98). Also: “The above statement does not mean that we consider the FBC to be a completely artificial creation and an outcome of arbitrary typological associations. In our opinion, the reach of the FBC reflects a real phenomenon – existence of a specific cultural province, determined both historically and through the structure of natural patency” (L. Czerniak, A. Kośko 1983, p. 98).

How, based on this, do I define the eastern group, which is sometimes ironically referred to as the “post and zigzag community”? It can be concluded, with a high level of probability, that the smaller the region, with clearer natural and cultural boundaries, that is considered, the more likely it is that the cultural groups identified in the region (entities with a small spatial and temporal range) reflect the real status of ethnic divisions. The eastern group, however, is a large cultural province in the framework of the “Paneuropean” FBC which grouped together different local communities that most likely had different opinions about their origins and different forms of organization and social structure, economy, and probably religion, but which were united by a supraregional information exchange network. In principle, it covered the areas of the eastern part of the Central-European Lowland, with the center certainly located in the large-valley part of the Lowland and, consequently, in accordance with the physico-geographic terminology, in the broadly defined border between the Southern-Baltic Lake District and the Central-Polish Plain (J. Kondracki 2002). Membership in this group of different human communities did not mean, however, that the individual member groups or entities were aware of the
existence of a cultural community that was larger than their own territorial communities (S. Kukawka 1997, p. 146).

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Siuchniński K., 1972, Klasyfikacja czasowo-przestrzenna kultur neolitycznych na Pomorzu Zachodnim, part II, Opracowanie analityczne, Szczecin.


Ogólnie rzecz biorąc, neolityczne społeczności na Kujawach miały kontakt z innymi kulturami i regionami, co wpływało na rozwój lokalnego kultury pucharów lejkowatych. W ramach badań archeologicznych, opracowywano chronologię i gospodarkę tych społeczności, co pozwala na lepsze zrozumienie ich relacji z innymi regionami Europy.


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