

Editorial

This year's volume of *Archaeologia Polona*, subtitled *Archaeology of Post-Medieval Pottery in Poland and Beyond. Tradition and Innovation*, features contributions focused on early-modern ceramics, the majority of which were found across present-day Poland and Czechia. Most of the papers concentrate on synchronic and antithetical processes occurring in pottery-making between the 16th and 18th centuries. These processes were marked with continuity, the persistence of older traditions in technology, style, and ornamentation – but at the same time brought about changes involving innovations in the aforementioned areas introduced during the period under discussion. Recognition of these phenomena and demonstrating their bipolarity, that is their distinctiveness and tight relationship, have been the primary goal of the present publication.

Such a broad range of problems was approached by addressing specific groups of ceramic vessels, including rich and diverse assemblages obtained from larger areas as well as those featuring pottery from a single centre or site. In some cases, the vantage point for the studies was provided by just one item. The contributions are either preliminary reports or synthetic papers. In terms of their geographical span, the presented research focuses predominantly on finds from the northern, central, and north-eastern parts of today's Poland. The rest deal with a single artefact from Sandomierz and post-medieval pottery from present-day Czechia.

According to the intention of the Editors, the presented contributions are intended to answer current demands of the scholarly community related to the ongoing development of historical archaeology and the growing numbers of material sources – ceramic objects from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. This way, the contributions to the 59th volume of *Archaeologia Polona* make a reference to the papers published in Polish in 2017, in the journal *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej* (cf., Dąbal 2017; Klarecki 2017; Kowalczyk 2017; Lis 2017; Marcinkowski 2017; Meyza 2017; Trzeciecki 2017; Więcek 2017). These were compiled on the basis of presentations given at an all-Poland's conference dedicated to post-medieval pottery, titled *Porcyllena, farfury i glina... Nowożytne naczynia ceramiczne jako źródła archeologiczne. Pochodzenie – zróżnicowanie – odbiorcy* [Porcelain, Faience and Clay... Early-modern Ceramic Vessels as Archaeological Sources. Origin – Diversity – Recipients] and held in the autumn of 2016 (Bis 2016). Another session of this conference series was scheduled in the spring of 2020, but had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These meetings have been aimed at bringing together Polish scholars interested in studies on this category of finds and at providing this community with a platform for exchange

of knowledge and experiences. Hence, this endeavour fits well into a broader horizon of actions undertaken currently in different parts of the European continent. As such, it will be continued.

The presented volume is composed of eight papers supplemented with a commemoration and three reviews. Two texts can be distinguished as most synthetic – the one authored by Michał Starski, *Continuation or Evolution? Changes in Pottery Production and Vessel Types Used in Pomerelian (Gdańsk Pomerania) Towns in the Early-Modern Period*, and the other by Maciej Trzeciecki, *Post-medieval Pottery in Mazovia and Podlachia (16th–18th Century) – a Preliminary Report*. Both deliver an analysis of complementary processes – transformations in pottery production and the assortment of goods used across Pomerelia (Gdańsk Pomerania), Mazovia, and Podlachia, along with their respective socio-economic backgrounds, in relation to different categories of sites. These three regions were characterised by distinct dynamics of economic development, urbanisation, socio-cultural change, etc. This makes it all the more interesting to trace how these phenomena are reflected in the analysed pottery assemblages, and creates their local specificity, and to what extent they match the European trends of that time. M. Starski's remarks pertain to the 16th century, a transitional period between the late Middle Ages and the early-modern period, and focus especially on finds from smaller Pomerelian townships and the largest urban centre of the region, Gdańsk. M. Trzeciecki, on the other hand, investigates processes spanning several centuries, from the 1500s to the 1800s, on the basis of finds from towns of various sizes and prominence as well as those obtained from royal or aristocratic residences, manor houses of the nobility, and rural areas. Such heterogeneity of the discussed assemblages is their advantage. This way a non-homogeneous picture emerges which unveils the realities of household ceramic vessels and reveals two underlying tendencies: perseverance of earlier manufacturing traditions, especially the greyware, in spite of the parallel appearance and gradual spread of better-quality products (for the 16th century – glazed ware, such as redware and whiteware or white-greyware as well as slipware; whereas for the later periods – faience and porcelain).

Another two texts, by Magdalena Bis and Joanna Dąbal, deal with artefacts still insufficiently researched in the Polish archaeological literature. The paper titled *Slipware from Tykocin Castle (Poland) from the 16th–18th Century* offers an analysis of the type of pottery known in the Polish literature under the name of semi-majolica or pseudo-majolica. It is a kind of redware (predominantly plates and bowls), covered with slip, decorated with painted ornaments, and finished with lead glaze. A morphological-technological analysis of the specimens of this type found within the castle site in Tykocin, Podlachia, is contributive to broader questions related to this category of finds from Poland, such as their provenance, origins, and relevant terminology. The text titled *Modern Ceramic Chafing Dishes in Northern Poland* draws attention to vessels of specific form and function, through the example of finds from two Pomeranian

urban centres – Słupsk and Gdańsk. These are warming dishes, that is, utensils used for holding burning charcoal or other combustible materials, to cook food, or to serve it hot at the table. They take the form of a perforated bowl or pot shaped body with a pedestal or three legs. Usually they have several knobs attached to the rims. Their meticulous description is complemented in the paper with considerations about their provenance, dating of similar specimens from Europe, and patterns of their consumption in the early-modern period.

The next two contributions also deal with vessels of unusual form and function. The first, titled *Stoneware Jars from the 18th Century from the Saxon Palace in Warsaw*, was authored by Ewelina Więcek-Bonowska. The vessels it discusses were made of resistant and impervious material – stoneware – and come in outstanding, four-sided shapes ornamented with royal monograms. They were used to store medical remedies for the court of King of Poland and Saxony Augustus II the Strong. Thus, they represent a group of uncommon artefacts that contribute to our knowledge of the archaeology of pharmacy.

Three scholars – Piotr Werens, Ireneusz Piwoński, and Aneta Kisielewska – contributed *Historical and SEM-EDS Analysis of a 14th–16th Century Triangular Crucible from Sandomierz, Poland*. They discuss an object from the collection of the District Museum in Sandomierz, of unclear provenance, namely a small crucible with a characteristic triangular perforation and a mark on the bottom. By identifying analogous finds from Central Europe, the authors determined its place of origin (Tulln in Austria) and dating. Additionally, archaeometric analyses allowed for clarifying the crucible's function – it was used in production of steel by carburising iron.

The question of how Polish research compares to professional studies on post-medieval pottery in the neighbouring Czechia is addressed in Gabriela Blažková's *Current State of Knowledge of the Development of Early Modern Ceramics in the Czech Republic*. The author provides a concise summary of the developments and research directions from the 1980s up to 2021. Particularly recent years have brought significant achievements in the form of extensive source publications.

An additional article in the volume, unrelated to the main topic, considers *A Unique 14th Century Seal-Matrix from Giebło, Zawiercie District*, prepared by Leszek Krudysz. The subject is a late-medieval seal matrix discovered in Lesser Poland. The author analyzes the form of the object and the meaning of the inscription and the lily motif on it, and attempts to determine the identity of the user for whom it was intended and under what circumstances it could have been made.

The further part of the volume contains a text prepared by Danuta Piotrowska and Wojciech Piotrowski – *John Morton Coles (1930–2020). From Palaeolithic Studies to Wetland Archaeology. A Commemoration*. It presents an outline of the character, life story, academic career, and accomplishments of an outstanding and all-round archaeologist, J. M. Coles. The authors put particular emphasis on the extraordinary

features of Professor Coles, along with his broad research interests and prominent discoveries in prehistory as well as experimental, wetland, and environmental sub-fields of archaeology. An important part of his professional activity was participation in numerous associations or editorial boards of archaeological periodicals, including *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* and *Antiquity*, and popularisation of archaeology.

The volume closes with several reviews of monographs. In keeping with the leading theme of the present volume, Magdalena Bis presents a review discussing a 2019 publication titled *Europa Postmediaevalis 2018. Post-Medieval Pottery Between (its) Borders* (edited by Gabriela Blažková and Kristýna Matějková).

Also related to the archaeology of the modern period is Paul Barford's review of the three volumes released in the years 2019 and 2021, resulting from an innovative interdisciplinary landscape archaeology project carried out near Bolimów in central Poland. This research involves elements of public archaeology and focuses attention on the previously somewhat-neglected archaeological traces and "dark heritage" of the "Forgotten Eastern Front" resulting from the eight-month trench warfare standoff between the Russian and German Imperial armies on Polish soil in 1914 and 1915.

A third review – *Gamzigrad-Studien I. Ergebnisse der deutsch-serbischen Forschungen im Umfeld des Palastes Romuliana*, published in 2020 (edited by Gerda von Bülow and Sofia Petković), is discussed by Alfred Twarecki. These are part of the results of the research on the *Gamzigrad* site (near Zaječar Serbia), i.e., in a vast complex of Roman buildings from the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 4th century AD in the province of Dacia Ripensis. The book includes: geophysical survey, topographical analysis, prehistory of the landscape of the area, as well as analysis of different categories of finds (pottery, coins, sculpture, mosaics).

It is the Editors' intention that the present papers in the special theme of this volume showcase the diversity of the products of the potter's craft available and used in the discussed period. It is also hoped that they will bring more attention to those types or forms of ceramics which have so far been omitted in Polish publications or under researched. They should also highlight important problems and pave the way for further research and studies. We also hope that they will lead to a wider discussion on ceramics from modern times. Whether this goal has been met and the degree to which the analysed questions deepen our understanding of post-medieval pottery in general, we leave to the judgement of our readers.

Magdalena Bis
Michał Starski
Ewelina Więcek-Bonowska

REFERENCES

- Bis, M. 2016. „Porcyllena, farfury i glina... Nowożytna naczynia ceramiczne jako źródła archeologiczne. Pochodzenie – zróżnicowanie – odbiorcy”, konferencja w Warszawie, 28 września 2016 r. *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej* 64(4): 527–533.
- Dąbal, J. 2017. Angielskie fajanse dekorowane motywem wierzby (*Willow pattern*) w świetle badań archeologicznych w Gdańsku. *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej* 65(3): 309–318.
- Marcinkowski, M. 2017. Wyroby fajansowe z manufaktur w Królewcu (koniec XVII–początek XIX w.). *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej* 65(3): 295–308.
- Meyza, K. 2017. Nowożytny warsztat garncarski ze Starej Warszawy. Nowe ustalenia. *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej* 65(2): 189–196.
- Klarecki, M. 2017. Pozostałości z osiemnastowiecznych serwisów warszawskich dworów królewskich. *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej* 65(2): 197–208.
- Kowalczyk, A. 2017. Znaleźiska nowożytnych naczyń kamionkowych z badań wykopaliskowych z terenu Polski. *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej* 65(3): 319–330.
- Lis, A. 2017. Zasób źródeł archeologicznych dla studiów nad garncarstwem nowożytnym na Mazowszu. *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej* 65(3): 343–352.
- Rodak, S. 2017. Ceramika nowożytna z badań na Starym Mieście w Brzegu. *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej* 65(2): 149–167.
- Trzeciecki, M. 2017. Naczynia gliniane z XVII–XVIII wieku, z badań zespołu podworskiego w Niegowie pod Wyszkowem. Przyczynek do poziomu życia szlacheckiej prowincji. *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej* 65(2): 169–187.
- Więcek, E. 2017. Butelki kamionkowe znalezione na terenie Apteki Królewskiej w Warszawie. *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej* 65(3): 331–342.