

Early Bronze Age is the last period of the European past, which remains completely beyond the evidence of written sources. However, many scholars believe that just at that very time a fusion of cultural heritage belonging to the people of the North and new ideas borrowed from the Near Eastern civilizations bore the roots of the same value system, we are able to trace both in the first literary tradition of archaic Greece and some hundreds years later, in the culture of classical antiquity. Around 20th century BC thanks to introduction of sail, Mediterranean world started to shrink rapidly and bold people began to penetrate its far peripheries looking for rare and valuable resources. Material traces of these journeys, leading toward the northern parts of Europe, have been discovered by archaeologists for a long time. There is also the old discussion about who and how had organized these travels and what was the role of communities, which occupied places along the main communication routes – these nameless tribes controlling coastline of the Balkan Peninsula, mountain passages of the Alps and Carpathians as well as the valleys of large rivers heading across the European Lowland towards the Baltic and Northern Sea. One of the most interesting pieces of this puzzle are remains of strongholds scattered over the territories of the “northern tribes” but at the same time characterized by the presence of stone defensive architecture, which has the best counterparts in the Bronze Age of the eastern Mediterranean. Few of them were identified by archaeologists on the Adriatic coast and in Alpine valleys, but the northernmost fortress of this type was discovered in the village Maszkowice upon Dunajec river (Southern Poland). After four years of intensive excavations we possess basic knowledge on the complicated and long history of this site as well as on changes in the way of living, economy and distant contacts of its inhabitants. However many questions still remain unclear, particularly with regard to the oldest stage of the hillfort occupation (ca. 1750 BC), when its elaborate stone fortification were raised. Our goal is to recognize better these unique constructions due to further excavations as well as to prepare publication of the full scientific monograph, which will present the results we have at our disposal currently. More about the stone architecture from Maszkowice on:

<http://www.pasthorizonspr.com/index.php/archives/09/2015/archaeologists-discover-earliest-known-stone-wall-in-poland>

http://www.nauka.uj.edu.pl/aktualnosci/-/journal_content/56_INSTANCE_Sz8leL0jYQen/74541952/98577380