

I. PROJECT OBJECTIVE

In the plethora of artefacts, which archaeology of the Central and North Europe faces at the turn of the eras, an inconspicuous item, but still emphasised by researchers, that is a spur, stands out. For some barbaric communities, it is an essential element of the horseman-warrior's equipment, for the others, it seems to be some kind of a symbol or a sign of exceptionality. However, regardless of its military or symbolic connotations, a spur found in a grave is always perceived as a distinctive feature of the high ranking deceased. This knowledge results from years of research conducted on burial sites of the Central European *Barbaricum*. Whereas the significance of a spur has been mainly determined on the basis of the archaeological context, thus the contents of a grave have been juxtaposed with a grave form.

Following the times, observing research on the space of excavation sites currently conducted around the world, the author of this project noticed an opportunity to extend knowledge of the artefact she is interested in. Not forgetting about previous scientific achievements, she posed a question whether the meaning attributed to spurs corresponds to their distribution in the burial sites. Were the deceased equipped with spurs buried according to specific principles? If so, are they universal or rather individual for each community? What connected horsemen with the community in which they died? What functions and role did they have?

II. RESEARCH TO BE CARRIED OUT

The process of all analyses will be preceded by the comprehensive material and literature search aiming at creating a catalogue on which research will be based. However, it should be emphasised that the author of the project has a considerable database which is the effect of research on the issue she has been carrying out for years. Further research work based on the collected information will involve the whole context of the presence of spurs in the space of cemeteries. The author will analyse the spatial relationships between the graves, taking account of such features as their goods, type as well as sex and age of the deceased, and their variability in time. This research will be carried out with the use of GIS, the geographical information system which allows to aggregate spatial and descriptive data in a clear and a structured manner, its comprehensive analysis and visualization, and importantly, will make it possible to compare the findings devised for individual burial sites. The final stage of work will involve the interpretation of the research findings and an attempt to answer the posed questions.

III. JUSTIFICATION FOR THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

According to the author, comprehensive research on the presence of spurs on burial sites, with the use of spatial analyses, is a gateway to success in terms of determining the value that a spur reflects, thus the status of the horseman-warrior-spur's owner in barbarian communities. The research conducted so far has been a side effect of a wider issue. Most often, however, such analyses are not conducted at all, and thus the knowledge on barbaric spurs is limited to the knowledge of their forms, their variability in time and space, the grave context in which they occur and possible cultural connections resulting from the above. According to the author, we are able to learn much more...