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**A NOTE ON EGYPTIAN SCARABS
FOUND IN POLISH TERRITORIES**

Among the few Egyptian objects found in Poland, the small group consisting of scarabs (coming from Zadowice, Leśno and Sadzarzewice) belongs the most important category of unquestioned imports¹.

Hitherto, only the scarab from Zadowice, province of Kalisz (Fig. 1), was relatively well known from literature². Its description, however, contained some inaccuracies. It was discovered in 1954 in the course of excavations in a Przeworsk culture cemetery. The scarab was in the smaller of the two urns of the cremation burial No. 95 (presumably it was the grave of a woman with a child, so the scarab has been discovered in the urn containing the ashes of the latter), dated to the second half of the 1st century A.D. (phase B1 of the Roman period).

During the examination of the material from Zadowice, it has recently been ascertained³ that grave No. 95, from which the above mentioned scarab comes, also contained in the same urn, the second scarab of analogous type (Fig. 2), yet considerably worse preserved, was found⁴.

¹ Apart from scarabs, this group includes considerably earlier Ptah-Pataikos amulet from Cieszków, Lower Silesia. The remaining groups are the probable and alleged imports and also some fakes. On Egyptian finds from Polish territories see recently J. Śliwa, *Some remarks on Aegyptiaca found in Poland*, [in:] *Hommage à Jean Leclant* (forthcoming).

² Cf. recently E. Kaszewska, *Zadowice. Tysiącletnie cmentarzysko na bursztynowym szlaku*, Łódź 1984, p. 39 and pp. 89–90; Fig. 69 on p. 67. Presently, the Zadowice scarab is kept in the Archaeological and Ethnographical Museum in Łódź, Inv. No. 1954/107.

³ I am indebted to Dr. E. Kaszewska (Łódź) for her consent to publish the two Zadowice scarabs here, and also to Dr. M. Mielczarek (Łódź) for his valuable assistance in reaching them.

⁴ Glued from six parts. Archaeological and Ethnographical Museum in Łódź, Inv. No. III/53/13. The establishing of its presence only many years after the excavations in this site had been completed may indicate that it is necessary to review accurately also the material coming from other sites, since at present the ascertainment is also possible of the earlier unrecognized imports of this type.

Another find is a scarab from Leśno, site 2, province of Gdańsk (Fig. 3), discovered only recently (1987) in a barrow cemetery of the Wielbark culture (tomb No. 29)⁵. The scarab has been found in the burial pit amidst the charred human bones of an individual aged 30–45, with a Celtic coin. The whole burial complex of the Wielbark culture at Leśno is dated to the second half of the 1st century A.D. (phase B1 of the Roman period)⁶.

The last, fourth find belonging to this group is a scarab from Sadzarzewice, province of Zielona Góra (Fig. 4). It was mentioned relatively early (1897) as a find coming from an urn grave cemetery of the Luboszyce culture⁷. Despite the fact that the object cannot be verified at present, there is sound evidence that it can be recognized as a certain import, found in one of the graves of the cemetery at Sadzarzewice, coming from the period between the end of the first half of the 2nd century A.D. and the turn of the 4th century A.D. (phases I–III of the Luboszyce culture)⁸.

It appears that all the scarabs mentioned above come from cremation burials, and this explains their rather poor state of preservation, i.e. partial burning and porousness of the faience mass they are made of⁹. In the case of both Zadowice scarabs and the scarab from Leśno, the traces of turquoise glaze can be spoken of, whereas the scarab from Sadzarzewice bore the vestiges of blue glaze, and at the tips of the elytra covered with parallel grooves, narrow red stripes were marked¹⁰. The dimensions of three scarabs were ca. 20 x 18 mm,

⁵ These works are headed by Dr. K. Walenta (Łódź), whom I would like to thank for the information quoted and the drawing of the object. The scarab is kept in the collection of the Chair of Archaeology of Łódź University (Inv. No. 1031/87).

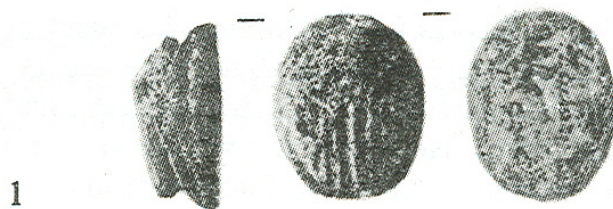
⁶ Cf. K. Walenta, *Przyczynek do genezy wielbarskich cmentarzysk z kregami kamiennymi*, *Folia Archaeologica* XIV (forthcoming).

⁷ Cf. H. Jentsch, *Skarabäen-Gemme von Sadersdorf, Kreis Guben*, *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, Bd. 29, 1897, pp. 169–170. The said scarab, now missing, was handed over already in the 19th century to the collections of the Gymnasium at Guben.

⁸ Cf. G. Domański, *Kultura luboszycka między Łabą a Odrą w II–IV wieku*. Wrocław 1979, p. 39 and note 251; p. 89 and note 797, No. 615. It is possible to limit the beginnings of the Sadzarzewice cemetery to the period of the developed stage of phase B₂ and to synchronize its decline with phase C₂ of the Roman period. Cf. K. Godłowski, *Przemiany kulturowe i osadnicze w południowej i środkowej Polsce w młodszym okresie przedrzymskim i w okresie rzymskim* (Prace Komisji Archeologicznej 23), Wrocław 1985, p. 97 (see also pp. 169, 174 and 177). Some indications for the dating of the scarab can also be obtained from the glass bead soldered to its lower surface (see below, note 9): the developed stage of phase B₂ can be most probably taken into account.

⁹ On the scarab from Sadzarzewice is moreover soldered a small bead and other elements. Cf. H. Jentsch, *Skarabäen-Gemme*, p. 169: "Er ist gefunden mit einigen melonenförmigen, bläulich weissen Perlen aus demselben Stoffe [gefritteter Thon], von denen leider eine seiner unteren Fläche anhaftet (Fig. 2), ferner mir einem angeschmolzenen, aufgebogenen Bronzeringe von 1,2 cm Durchmesser im Lichten, mit zwei kleinen, eimerförmigen Breloques und mit einer milchglasartigen Masse, die einem Knochenstücke angebacken ist". The melon-like bead mentioned here belongs most probably to type No. 171 distinguished by M. Tempelmann-Maczyńska (*Die Perlen der römischen Kaiserzeit und der frühen Phase der Völkerwanderung im mitteleuropäischen Barbaricum* [Römisch-Germanische Forschungen, Band 43], Mainz 1985, pp. 39–41). Beads of this type are dated from phase B₂ onwards; in the late Roman period they are relatively rare.

¹⁰ Cf. H. Jentsch, *Skarabäen-Gemme*, p. 170: "[...] dem Schlussstück der Flügeldecken haften kleine Streifen lackartig rother Farbe an".



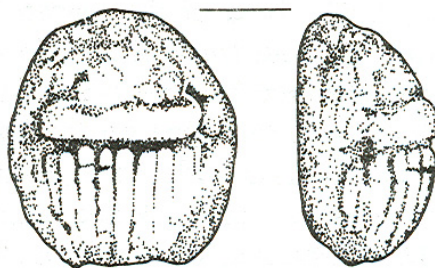
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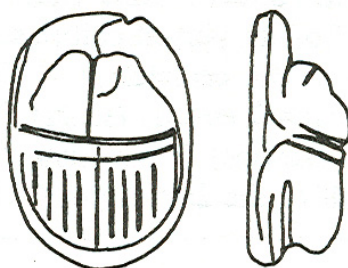
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1. Scarab from Zadowice, province of Kalisz
 Phot. by the Archaeological and Ethnographical Museum in Łódź

2. Fragmentarily preserved scarab from Zadowice, province of Kalisz
 Phot. by the Archaeological and Ethnographical Museum in Łódź

3. Scarab from Lešno, province of Gdańsk
 Drawing courtesy of Dr. K. Walenta, Łódź

4. Scarab from Sadzarzewice, province of Zielona Góra (now lost)
 After H. Jentsch, *Skarabäen-Gemme*, p. 169, Fig. 1 and 2

with thickness amounting to 10–11 mm¹¹. On the other hand, the scarab from Sadzarzewice was slightly larger, with its dimensions being 26 x 15 mm according to the information preserved¹². All these scarabs had the apertures situated along the axis, which enabled their suspension or insertion as a necklace element (these apertures were from 1 to 3 mm in diameter).

The modelling of all scarabs discussed here was naturalistic, with clear division of the back into elytra and prothorax. In all cases, moreover, the surface of the elytra is covered with parallel grooves. The prothorax is characteristically thickened, which can particularly be seen with the objects from Zadowice and Leśno¹³. The obliterated details render it possible to establish the manner in which the head and clypeus were shaped, but it seems, as some discernible details indicate, that they were rather carefully modelled. The legs of the bugs were also modelled in a naturalistic, accurate way.

A flat, clearly distinguishable base was encircled with an engraved rim (Zadowice, Sadzarzewice). On its flat surface, in the case of the scarabs from Zadowice and Sadzarzewice, there were engraved signs, perhaps imitating the outline of a rearing cobra¹⁴. The base of the scarab from Leśno was, on the other hand, completely flat, with no trace of any sign.

On the grounds of the mentioned features (dimensions, material and colour of the glaze, modelling traits and the signs on the base), some of the objects under consideration can be classified within the group of the faience scarabs, occurring on the northern coast of the Black Sea. Our objects fall into the 50c type distinguished by E. M. Alekseeva, spreading in the time-span from the 1st century B.C. to the 2nd century A.D., yet most often dated in this area to the 1st century A.D.¹⁵

In the Polish prehistoric context, these finds fall into the northern and western peripheries of the Roman period cultures. They come, as has already been mentioned above, from the cemeteries of the Przeworsk culture (both objects from Zadowice), Wielbark culture (scarab from Leśno), and Luboszyce culture (scarab from Sadzarzewice) in the time from the middle of the 1st century A.D. to the first half of the 2nd century A.D. (from phase B₁ until the

¹¹ The dimensions of the intact Zadowice scarab were 21 x 17.5 x 10 mm, whereas those of the fragmentarily preserved one were 20 x 17.5 x 10 mm. The scarab from Leśno has the dimensions 20 x 19 x 11 mm.

¹² Cf. H. Jentsch, *Skarabäen-Gemme*, p. 170: "Die Länge beträgt 26, die grösste Breite 15 mm".

¹³ In spite of some differences, this is also the feature of the Sadzarzewice object.

¹⁴ As in the case of the so-called Black Sea scarabs (cf. below, note 15). Considering the scarab from Sadzarzewice, H. Jentsch (*Skarabäen-Gemme*, p. 170) describes this sign as follows: "Der unteren Fläche ist eine dem Umriss — jedoch in Folge des begonnenen Schmelzprozesses nicht ganz genau — entsprechende Furche eingepägt und im Felde innerhalb derselben nahe der angeschmolzenen Perle ein Kreis und zwischen diesem und dem Längriss eine etwas einem Γ. ähnliche Zeichnung, endlich unter der Perle eine längliche Keulen-oder flaschenförmige Aus-tiefung. Eine Deutung der Zeichen hat sich bis jetzt nicht als möglich erwiesen".

¹⁵ E. M. Alekseeva, *Antičnye busy Severnogo Pričernomoria*. Part I, Moscow 1975, p. 42 and Pl. 10.

developed stage of phase B₂ of the Roman period).¹⁶ In spite of some typological similarities with the so-called Black Sea scarabs, their occurrence is most probably linked with western trade routes, and primarily with the amber route.

¹⁶ Apart from the scarabs mentioned above, two objects of analogous features with the outline of a snake on a base clearly discernible are known from the Poznań collections (cf. J. Kubczak, ed., *Muzeum Narodowe w Poznaniu. Zbiory starożytności. Katalog wystawy*, Poznań 1983, Nos. 232 and 233). Their provenance is unknown, yet it cannot be excluded that they also come from archaeological finds in this country.