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ANDRZEJ JACEK TOMASZEWSKI

FORAGERS, FARMERS AND ARCHAEOLOGISTS: A COMMENT ON B. OLSEN'S
PAPER "INTERACTION BETWEEN HUNTER-GATHERERS AND FARMERS:
ETHNOGRAPHICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES"
FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF POLISH ARCHAEOLOGY

B. Olsen's paper (1988) is concerned with an interesting and important question of mutual relations between the communities of farmers and hunter-gatherers. In archaeology this question is usually set within the broadly conceived problem of neolithization which is one of the key, great problems of the discipline, apart from, e.g., the process of hominization, the peopling of continents or the emergence of towns. The solution of these problems is considered the domain of archaeology, for it has at its disposal appropriate sources and time perspective.

For many decades the evolutionist orientation of archaeology must have affected the approach to the problem of neolithization, seeing in the Neolithic a stage of the development in terms of technology and social organization higher with respect to that of the foragers, and further step in the man's independence of Nature. If the conditions leading to this cultural change, often defined as the "Neolithic revolution", were considered, references were made to the internal dynamics of culture, ecological factors or demographic ones, which either singly or together, when coupled (S. Polgar 1975), forced the discovery, adoption and spread of the new way of gaining food. This would be done by way of a qualitative jump, gradual evolution, or acculturation, and was often related to the territorial expansion of the population which mastered the higher form of economy. At the same time the nature of available archaeological data brought about the concentration of efforts on their temporal and taxonomic ordering, although the growing number of finds made functionalist reconstructions the object of justified interest. With the passage of time, there emerged distinct tendencies to a systemic processual study of phenomena in categories external to archaeological data. In this situation, the anthropological purpose consisting in determining the social conditions

accompanying the situations of contacts between producers of food and hunter-gatherers were on the margin of the research.

On the other hand, the uniformitarian premises which could throw enough light on the character of such contacts were distorted by modern experiences of colonization by white man, connected with his economic expansion, the purpose and result of which was to exploit forager peoples. The present-day contact situations in which hunter-gatherers are involved can also have such an exploitation character (e.g., M. G. Guenther 1976). The fact that relations between foragers and farmers can take a different turn is indicated by ethnographic examples which were cited by B. Olsen. On the other hand, it should be pointed out that this reciprocal character of contacts has only since recently focussed the attention of researchers, indicated by the dates of the publications which B. Olsen quotes and the date when the results of observations made by C. Turnbull in the 1960's were compiled from this point of view (compare also T. D. Price, J. A. Brown 1985). At this point, it is interesting to note the view-of-the-world shock caused by the essay by M. Sahlins (1974) devoted to the "original affluent society".

Just as everywhere, in Polish archaeology, much attention has been paid to the problem of neolithization. On the other hand, since at least the 1960's there has been a considerable tendency to point out the role of local Mesolithic substrate in the cultural landscape which arose and has changed since the evident farmer colonization of chosen ecological and physiographic zones in Poland by the population of the Danubian complex arriving from the south. Facts indicating symbiosis and mutual contacts between farmers and foragers, although very modest in terms of quantity and quality, have been consistently quoted, with some reserve initially, however (see J. Kostrzewski, W. Chmielewski, K. Jażdżewski 1965, p. 68), in synthetic elaborations of the prehistory of the Polish lands, or monograph studies on the Mesolithic and Neolithic (e.g., J. Kowalczyk 1969; S. K. Kozłowski 1968, pp. 448 ff; 1971; 1972, pp. 226-228; W. Hensel 1973, p. 36; J. K. Kozłowski, S. K. Kozłowski 1977; T. Wiślański 1970a, pp. 429-435, 438-440, 447; 1979a; A. Kulczycka-Leciejewiczowa 1968, pp. 58-59; 1970, pp. 43-44, 53, 68, 70-71; 1979). Many such determinations were based on typological arguments, in particular the appropriate identification of Mesolithic flint materials, and the developing studies on the exploitation and distribution in the Mesolithic and Neolithic of flint materials coming from well localized beds. The progress in dating assemblages and cartographic arguments acquired in the course of studies on the distribution of Mesolithic and Neolithic sites were equally important.

Apart from dates of assemblages pointing out the persistence of hunter-gatherers' groups deep into the Subboreal climate period, independently of farmers' groups, a premise for concluding about the existence of contacts was the presence of Mesolithic artifacts in the Neolithic context and conversely. As far as the former go, researchers have long mentioned (e.g., J. Kostrzewski 1933) flint armatures (triangles, trapezes and truncated pieces), Mesolithic in terms of typology, which were found singly in pits, graves and sites of older Neolithic cultures related to the Danubian complex, and also those of Middle Neolithic farming cultures of local origin – the Funnel Beaker Culture and the Globular Amphora culture. The connection between those finds typologically Mesolithic and Neolithic assemblages was to be indicated by the position of these sites in fertile soils in zones from which Mesolithic sites were not known (Z. Bagniewski 1981, pp. 116-117), contradicting by the same spoken the possibility of mechanical addition.

The identification of the existence of contacts was also contributed to by systematic studies on the extraction and distribution of flint materials from specific beds, in particular of the characteristic chocolate flint whose outcrops are on the northeast footslopes of the Holy Cross Mountains in Central Poland. Confirmed for Lower, Middle and Late Paleolithic and the Mesolithic, the use of this raw material was continued in the Neolithic cultures belonging to the Danubian complex and also later in the Funnel Beaker culture. On the other hand, the beds of this raw material are distant from the compact settlement of Band Pottery Cultures, in view of which, taking into account the late dates obtained for Late

Mesolithic assemblages and the early ones for those of the Band Pottery culture, there was a tendency to accept the thesis that the early farmers were supplied with this raw material by Late Mesolithic foragers from the Janislawice culture (the Vistulian complex) (R. Schild 1976, p. 174; J. K. Kozłowski, S. K. Kozłowski 1977, pp. 263, 265). The presence of obsidian in certain Late Mesolithic assemblages agreed with this thesis. Used by the early Neolithic population, obsidian came from the Tokay region in Hungary, taken over by the population of the Danubian complex, where, however, the settlement of the Vistulian complex did not reach. Consequently, obsidian must have reached the Vistulian complex population by way of exchange. It was only the later research on the chocolate flint mine in Tomaszów, Radom District, that made it possible to establish that farmers of the Danubian complex extracted this raw material themselves (R. Schild, R. Królik, H. Marczak 1985), as had been suggested even earlier (R. Schild 1976, p. 161). It was determined that supplies must have been provided by long-distance farmers' expeditions, although it was not excluded in effect that the information about the existence of beds in Tomaszów was passed to the early farmers directly by the Mesolithic users of this place (R. Schild, H. Królik, M. Marczak 1985, pp. 93, 203).

The existence of bilateral contacts between hunter-gatherers and farmers was also to be indicated by the finds of Neolithic artifacts in the context of Mesolithic assemblages. This applied to single fragments of pottery related to the Linear Band Pottery complex (S. K. Kozłowski 1971, p. 67; 1972, p. 227; J. K. Kozłowski, S. K. Kozłowski 1977, pp. 265, 267; A. Kulczycka-Leciejewiczowa 1979, p. 47). The loose finds of polished cylindrical axes and shoelast-shaped axes, related to the Danubian complex cultures, but found in zones not occupied by these cultures, were interpreted in a similar spirit (T. Wiślański 1970b, p. 30; J. K. Kozłowski, S. K. Kozłowski 1977, pp. 243, 248-249, 265, 267; A. Kulczycka-Leciejewiczowa 1968, pp. 58-59; 1970, p. 70; 1979, pp. 37, 47).

The greater stress laid on fishing, hunting and gathering in the later stages of Band Pottery cultures when their settlement spread to a larger extent to the Polish Lowlands, was also connected with the influence of hunter-gatherer communities. The evidence to this were to be elements of hunting arms and more numerous bones of wild animals in such sites (e.g., T. Wiślański 1970a, p. 429; A. Kulczycka-Leciejewiczowa 1979, pp. 37, 47-48).

These modest facts were repeated many times as evidence to the persistence of the hunter-gatherer population into the Neolithic, the durability of the local late Mesolithic base and its role in the cultural landscape, despite the arrival of farmers' communities from the south, to take over fertile loessic brown and black soils, without penetrating zones of less fertile podsols, which were, however, an Eldorado for hunter-gatherer groups (S. K. Kozłowski 1971, p. 66). At the same time, the contribution of the indigenous substrate to the later formation of local, fully Neolithic cultures, which settled to a larger extent the Polish Lowlands, was also noted (e.g., T. Wiślański 1979b, p. 174; 1979c, p. 262; K. Cyrek, R. Grygiel, K. Nowak 1983, p. 108). Nevertheless, as before until the end of the Neolithic into the Subboreal climate period, in large areas of Polish lands there survived hunter-gatherer communities which, however, already made pottery. This provided the basis for distinguishing specific units, such as the Pottery Mesolithic, sub-Neolithic, proto-Neolithic or para-Neolithic cultures, the Forest Neolithic or the cultures of the forest zone (J. Kowalczyk 1969; E. Kempisty 1970; 1973; S. K. Kozłowski 1971, pp. 68, ff; T. Wiślański 1979a, p. 9; K. Cyrek, R. Grygiel, K. Nowak 1983). Researchers point out moreover the presence in assemblages of the Danubian cultures, particularly the younger ones, of stylistic elements in pottery and figurative plastic artifacts which can be connected with the Pottery Mesolithic. This is supposed to prove, apart from the early origin of the pottery production in the latter unit, the resultant borrowings and imports from it, and also its contribution to the formation of the pottery style of the local, fully Neolithic Globular Amphora culture (K. Cyrek, R. Grygiel, K. Nowak 1983, pp. 85-86, 106-108).

The laying of emphasis on the significance of local foragers even led to the formulation

of a risky thesis of the contribution of the local Mesolithic substrate in the emergence of the Linear Band Pottery cultures and the existence of the Prepottery Neolithic in the Polish lands (J. Kowalczyk 1969), which, however, was not confirmed in materials and never accepted by other researchers (J. K. Kozłowski, S. K. Kozłowski 1977, p. 264; A. Kulczycka-Leciejewiczowa 1979, p. 26). A symptom of similar tendencies to bring out the role of the local substrate is also the sometimes insufficiently critical including in the Pottery Mesolithic the assemblages of relics, with pottery and Mesolithic-type flint artifacts, which are uncertain in terms of homogeneity (K. Cyrek, R. Grygiel, K. Nowak 1983), and the acceptance of very late, dubious dates for Mesolithic assemblages (Z. Bagniewski 1981, pp. 114-115).

Thus, one cannot say that the approach of Polish researchers to the problem of neolithization is characterized by "Neolithic chauvinism"; if one were to speak of chauvinism at all, it would rather be Mesolithic.

Putting aside the typically historical-cultural interpretations, the behavioral interpretation of the observed facts indicating mutual contacts between farmers and foragers operates in the Polish literature with *ad hoc* formulated superficial or common-sensical terms such as "coexistence", "exchange", "purchase", and "imports". It is an anecdotic, though significant, thing that e.g., the presence of Mesolithic armatures of arrows in Neolithic assemblages is not explained as a manifestation of fights between foragers and farmers, nor are Neolithic sherds in the Mesolithic context considered loot.

It is known that archaeological facts are polysemic (L. S. Klein 1979, p. 52). Therefore, their interpretation depends on many factors. It is affected by the attachment of researchers to specific categories of facts occurring in relation to others, less close to them. What is also essential is the scientific paradigm within which the researcher works (R. C. Dunnell 1978; L. R. Binford, J. A. Sabloff 1983). However, this paradigm is determined by less objective aspects too, which can be called ethnocentric and which make it possible to make the "leap of faith" inevitable in archaeology (J. E. Yellen 1977, p. 272). It was exactly such factors that may have effected the predilection of Norwegian archaeologists, and others too, to conceive the problem of the foragers-farmers relation as a process of unidirectional acculturation, since in their civilizational and ethnic consciousness they probably identify themselves, even involuntarily, with farmers rather than foragers still living now in the northern part of Norway. Similarly, the tendencies among Polish archaeologists to emphasize, or even overappreciate, the role of the local Mesolithic substrate in the Neolithic period may result from the fact that the earliest farmers colonized the Polish lands, being here an allochthonic element. This would, thus, be *sui generis* Mesolithic chauvinism, or rather atavism. It is only the progress of research awareness, along with new data, that can free the discipline from the peculiar interpretation axiology, attributing values to certain types of interpretation at the expense of others.

Returning to B. Olsen's paper, it can be said that the facts he cites agree with those which have been dilligently collected by Polish archaeology. On the other hand, the interpretation he draws of the nature of mutual contacts between foragers and farmers is probable, for in the interpretation of the temporal and spatial distribution of elements of material culture, it is necessary to include also the possibly symbolic function of utilitarian objects (e.g., L. R. Binford 1962; I. Hodder 1977; 1979), and to recognize that they could be both indicators and signs (L. E. Patrick 1985). The awareness of this dichotomic role of objects points out so far mainly the unjustified nature of many commonsensical archaeological interpretations (e.g., I. Hodder 1977). Nevertheless the nature of data at the archaeologist's disposal brings about the fact that it is extremely difficult to reconstruct fully the functions of objects in both, sometimes mutually exclusive spheres, this reconstruction remaining so far a purpose rather than scientific reality. B. Olsen's attempt to do so shows at the same time potential traps (e.g., the recognition that certain cultural traits may have been adopted by foragers to communicate symbolically conformity with norms characteristic of farmers, in order to gain thus access to highly appreciated objects controlled by the latter), may lead to circular argument in reasoning, if one were to take into account the

difficulties in controlling symbolic meanings in archaeology. If certain cultural traits or objects were assumed symbolically in order to gain other objects having evidently a symbolic value too, it is necessary to distinguish between two kinds of symbolism of objects in archaeological data where these objects are associated. For one may ask, e.g., if foragers took over pottery in order to gain iron axes, or if it was the other way round, or perhaps both categories were a purpose, or on the contrary, a means to attain something else. Certainly, present ethnoarchaeological observations not only make it possible to disclose this important problem, but can also provide some suggestions as to its solution. B. Olsen used them, deriving explicitly archaeological implications and expectations. On the other hand, one should expect some differentiation in specific implementations of such "Machiavellist" mechanisms engaging utilitarian objects in a role other than that of use, although the relative simplicity of the techno-economic systems to be considered here makes it possible to define roughly the universum of implementations in terms of which such mechanisms can occur. On the other hand, it is difficult to imagine that such complex techno-economic aspects as farming and pottery making were assimilated by foragers primarily as a means of the symbolic communication of conformity. The complexity of these aspects may have been the reason why the availability phase lasted so long. One can wonder at what point of a certain continuum of the farmers-foragers relation formulated in this way, we could speak of the acculturation of the latter, of their neolithization.

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List of abbreviations

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 "APolski" – „Archeologia Polski”, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków
Neolit – *Neolit. Prahistoria ziem polskich*, vol. 2, W. Hensel, T. Wiślański (eds.), Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk
The Neolithic... – *The Neolithic in Poland*, T. Wiślański (ed.), Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków
 „WA” – „Wiadomości Archeologiczne”, Warszawa

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 UWAGI O ARTYKULE B. OLSENA "INTERACTION BETWEEN
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 Z PUNKTU WIDZENIA POLSKIEJ ARCHEOLOGII

Streszczenie

Warunki społeczne towarzyszące kontaktom między zbieraczami-łowcami a rolnikami stanowiły na ogół margines badawczy w archeologii, która zajmowała się przede wszystkim ustalaniem przyczyn i mechanizmów prowadzących do powstania i upowszechnienia (por. np. S. Polgar 1975) wyższej formy gospodarowania, za jaką – w panującej perspektywie ewolucjonistycznej – uchodziło rolnictwo. Aktualistyczne przesłanki, które mogłyby naświetlić charakter takich kontaktów, skażone były natomiast nowożytnymi doświadczeniami kolonizacyjnymi białego człowieka, mającymi – również obecnie (np. M. G. Guenther 1976) – eksploatorski wyraz. Od lat siedemdziesiątych dopiero, jak świadczą o tym publikacje cytowane przez B. Olsena, a potwierdza m. in. szok światopoglądowy na Zachodzie wywołany przez esej M. Sahlinsa (1974), zwrócono uwagę na wzajemnościowy aspekt relacji rolników i zbieraczy-łowców.

W archeologii ziem polskich, gdzie problemowi neolityzacji tradycyjnie poświęcano sporo uwagi, istnieje jednak od dość dawna tendencja do uwypuklania roli miejscowego podłoża mezolitycznego w krajobrazie kulturowym, który powstał i zmieniał się od czasu przybycia z południa pierwszych rolników. Jedną z przyczyn tego były zapewne postępy w rozpo-

znaniu mezolitu. W licznych pracach przytaczano skromne niekiedy argumenty chronologiczne, kartograficzne, typologiczne i z zakresu dystrybucji surowców kamiennych, mające tę rolę podkreślić i wskazywać na koegzystencję dwóch światów. Powoływano się więc na obecność pojedynczych, mezolitycznych w typie artefaktów krzemiennych w obiektach neolitycznych (np. J. Kostrzewski 1933), a argumenty kartograficzne dowodzące zajmowania przez ludność neolityczną odmiennych stref ekologicznych przeczyć miały mechanicznej domieszce. Ludności późnomezolitycznej przypisywano też zaopatrywanie wczesnych rolników w krzemień czekoladowy (R. Schild 1976, s. 174; J. K. Kozłowski, S. K. Kozłowski 1977, s. 263), czego poparciem miało być oddalenie jego wychodni od stref zwartego osadnictwa kultur wstęgowych, późne daty dla mezolitu i wczesne dla zespołów wstęgowych, a także obecność w zespołach późnomezolitycznych wytworów z obsydianu pochodzącego z terenów zajętych przez ludność cyklu naddunajskiego. Dopiero badania kopalni w Tomaszowie pozwoliły ustalić, że rolnicy sami wydobywali ten krzemień, organizując specjalne wyprawy (R. Schild, H. Królik, M. Marczak 1985, s. 93). O istnieniu wzajemnych kontaktów świadczyć miały również znaleziska wytworów neolitycznych (ceramika linearna, siekiery walcowate, motyki, bądź topory w kształcie kopyta szewskiego) w kontekście mezolitycznym, czy też z dala od obszarów zasiedlonych przez ludność kultur cyklu naddunajskiego (np. A. Kulczycka-Leciejewiczowa 1968, s. 58; T. Wiślański 1970b, s. 30). Jako wpływ społeczności zbieracko-łowickich tłumaczono też większy nacisk kładziony na rybołówstwo, myślistwo i zbieractwo w późniejszych fazach kultur tego cyklu. Odnotowywano zarazem rolę miejscowego podłoża na późniejsze ukształtowanie się lokalnych w pełni neolitycznych kultur (np. T. Wiślański 1979b, s. 174), uznając przy tym przeżywanie się w głąb okresu subborealnego społeczności zbieracko-łowickich, które wytwarzały już ceramikę i które określano jako mezolit ceramiczny, neolit leśny, kultury strefy leśnej czy sub- proto-, bądź paraneolityczne (E. Kempisty 1970; 1973; S. K. Kozłowski 1971, s. 68; T. Wiślański 1979a, s. 9). Na gruncie tych tendencji sformułowano nawet ryzykowną tezę o udziale miejscowego substratu mezolitycznego w powstaniu kultur kręgu linearnego i istnieniu na ziemiach polskich neolitu preceramicznego (J. Kowalczyk 1969), włączano do tzw. mezolitu ceramicznego niepewne co do homogeniczności kolekcje z ceramiką i mezolitycznymi w typie wytworami krzemiennymi (K. Cyrek, R. Grygiel, K. Nowak 1983) oraz przyjmowano dla zespołów mezolitycznych budzące wątpliwości, bardzo młode daty (Z. Bagniewski 1981).

Stanowisko polskiej archeologii wobec problemu cechuje więc nie tyle szowinizm neolityczny, o jakim pisze B. Olsen, co raczej mezolityczny.

W interpretacji polisemicznych (L. S. Klejn 1979, s. 52) faktów archeologicznych pewną rolę odgrywają mniej obiektywne względy, m. in. etnocentryczne. Archeolodzy norwescy ujmują relację rolników i zbieraczy-łowców jako proces jednokierunkowej akulturacji, utożsamiając się zapewne w swej świadomości cywilizacyjnej i etnicznej raczej z rolnikami niż ze zbieraczami-łowcami zamieszkującymi jeszcze obecnie północną część Norwegii, podczas gdy tendencja polskich archeologów do uwypuklenia roli miejscowego substratu mezolitycznego w neolicie może po części wynikać z faktu, że pierwsi rolnicy stanowili tu element allochtoniczny.

Konieczne jest też, jak to czyni B. Olsen, uwzględnienie ewentualnie symbolicznej funkcji użytkowych w charakterze cech kulturowych (np. L. R. Binford 1962; I. Hodder 1977; 1979; L. E. Patrick 1985). Jednak ustalanie, które cechy były asymilowane jako środek do osiągnięcia czegoś innego, a które były celem w tego rodzaju mechanizmach, nie jest łatwe w archeologii. Trudno sobie jednak wyobrazić, że środkiem do komunikowania konformizmu były tak złożone aspekty technoeconomiczne, jak rolnictwo czy produkcja ceramiki.

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