



Jan Gancarski

TRZCINICA –
KARPACKA TROJA



SUMMARY

Trzcinica is a place in south-eastern Poland, a few kilometres north-west of Jasło. A stronghold known for many centuries as Wały Króleskie (Royal Earthworks) is situated there on an elevation just over the bottom of the flat Valley of the Ropa (latitude 49° 44' 00" N; longitude 21° 25' 53" E). The hill on which the stronghold stands has very steep slopes on three sides (N, S, and E) with gradients of 20°–40°, and it rises nearly 30 m over the valley which surrounds it on three sides (Fig 8, 9, 10). It is one of the most important archaeological sites in Poland.

The site attracted the attention of archaeologists already in the 19th century, and numerous excavation projects were conducted here in the 20th century. The first professional research was done in 1957, by the Carpathian Archaeological Expedition. In 1958 and 1962 the archaeologist A. Kunysz ran an excavation project here, digging three trenches of surface area 114 sq. m. His team confirmed the existence of an Early Mediaeval stronghold here, and discovered artefacts dated to prehistoric times. Later M. Parczewski identified Mierzanowice Culture pottery among the artefacts discovered here, and later still J. Gancarski identified other pieces as Otomani-Füzesabony Culture artefacts. The sensational research Jan Gancarski has carried out here in the last 15 years has made Trzcinica famous (Gancarski 2001a, 2001b). His interdiscipli-

nary team of scholars has studied a total surface area of 1566.75 sq. m, excavating and examining one of the most ancient defensive settlements in Poland and confirming evidence of the earliest influence of the Anatolian-Balkan Civilisation on Polish territories. The historic status and cultural value of this place has endowed it with another epithet: the "Carpathian Troy". In addition it is the site of one of the oldest and best preserved Slavonic strongholds in Poland (780–1030 AD), stretching over an area of nearly 3 ha (Gancarski 2003). Over 160,000 artefacts have been discovered here, many of them unique items. The Trzcinica discoveries have made a signal contribution to what we know about the beginnings of the Bronze Age in this part of Europe, and also about Early Slavonic fortified strongholds.

The Carpathian Troy: The Beginnings of Bronze Age Stronghold

A community belonging to the Pleszów Group of the Mierzanowice Culture settled here around 2100–2000 BC, on an area of about 56 – 60 ares. Their settlement was surrounded by an earthwork

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