Life on the Edge:
Social, Political and Religious Frontiers in Early Medieval Europe

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Social, Political and Religious Frontiers in Early Medieval Europe

Edited by Sarah Semple, Celia Orsini and Sian Mui

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Preface

The sixth volume of the series 'Neue Studien zur Sachsenforschung' presents 36 papers presented originally at the 63rd Internationales Sachsensymposion, held in St John's College at Durham University, from the 1st to 6th of September 2012. These proceedings have been published with the Braunschweigisches Landesmuseum and the Internationales Sachsensymposion.

The theme of the conference 'Life on the Edge: Social Political and Religious Frontiers in Early Medieval Europe', was stimulated by the situation of Durham in the ancient kingdom of Northumbria. Formed from a series of smaller British polities in the 7th century, this political unit, at its greatest extent, reached from the Irish to the North Sea and from the River Humber north to the Firth of Forth, now in Scotland. It brought together British and Anglo-Saxon communities, but also at times encompassed Pictish populations. To the south, the kingdom spanned the old Roman frontier, and its legacy of fortifications, some of which continued in active use in the 5th and perhaps even 6th centuries. This frontier continued to exert an influence on the early medieval populations of the region, and Hadrian's Wall, the stone-built limit of Britannia, ultimately came to form a building medium for some of the remarkable early Christian churches and sculptures that survive in northern England today.

As a result of Roman and Romano-British legacies, cultural exchanges and contacts with Irish and North Sea communities, and conflicts and political alliances with British and Pictish territories, the region offers a unique landscape in which to consider issues of politics and identity in early medieval society. This gave rise to the conference theme, with the hope that members might contribute papers that touched on liminality, frontiers and boundaries, centres and peripheries and borderlands, as well as stylistic, artistic, linguistic and cultural divides. In total 42 members and invited speakers presented at Durham, with six poster presentations. Although not all participants chose to publish in the volume, this proceedings represents a rich and varied repertoire of papers that capture the temporal and geographic breadth of the event.

The articles included range widely, dealing with archaeology, art, and at times written sources, and cover the 1st to the 13th centuries AD. Geographically the papers touch on sites and finds from Britain and Scotland, Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Poland. Articles encompass many topics, including exchange at the North Sea edge, the building of linear divisions and defences, central places and production, religious transition, cultural borders, burial and identity, and the limits between real and imagined worlds. A number of invited participants and contributors also provide a specialist view of northern mainland Britain, focussed on key political and religious transitions and important discoveries of sites and objects.

The conference organising committee comprised Sarah Semple, Becky Gowland, Richard Gameson, John Henry Clay and David Petts (all Durham University), who were ably guided by the Internationalen Sachsensymposion UK Co-ordinating Committee: Charlotte Behr, John Hines and Chris Scull. In addition the event was made possible by the hard work of a group of Durham doctoral student volunteers: Jocelyn Baker, Brian Buchanan, Lisa Brundle, Celia Orsini and Tudor Skinner.

An important feature of the Durham meeting was the attendance of a group of Polish members, whose papers appear here under Section III. Space, Place, Frontiers and Borders. It seems apt that our conference on frontiers witnessed the bringing together of scholars working on early medieval archaeology in northern and eastern Europe. Another distinctive provision was funding from the Internationales Sachsensymposion, Durham University and Durham's Institute for Medieval and Early Modern Studies, to support scholarships for PhD students and early career researchers, allowing them attend and present their work. As a consequence this volume includes articles by number of new researchers from different countries.

During the conference, an excursion was made to some of the key sites in Northumberland and County Durham: to Holy Island, Lindisfarne, to see the site of the early Christian monastic community, the surviving sculptures and the medieval priory; to Bamburgh Castle, a seat of power from late prehistory, through to the Viking and Norman periods; to Yeavering or Gefrin, a central place and site of royal power and conversion in the 6th to 7th centuries AD; and to the Anglo-Saxon church at Escomb, Co Durham. The organising committee would like to thank Historic England for facilitating access to the exhibition at Lindisfarne, and David Petts for site tours of the abbey. Thanks are due to Graeme Young for the tour of the Bamburgh excavations, Eric Cambridge for introducing conference participants to Escomb, and The Gefrin Trust for an on-site tour of Yeavering and the

exhibition, coffee and traditional Northumbrian tart served up at Kirknewton Village Hall.

This volume is edited by Sarah Semple, Celia Orsini and Sian Mui, and we are grateful for the goodwill and patience of authors, and their willingness to publish in English. Authors worked hard to meet the conference theme and the articles presented here are split into sections, to reinforce the connections and synergies between papers. An introduction to the volume comments on key common findings. The papers represent the state of study in 2013 when most contributions were submitted for publication, but many authors took the opportunity to update their articles in 2015–16. This is a double peer-reviewed volume, a process which takes time, but has significantly strengthened the cogency of the book, making it an original contribution to current thinking on the theme of social, religious and political frontiers in early medieval Europe.

The editors would like to thank Alejandra Gutiérrez for typesetting the volume, Babette Ludowici for assistance throughout the production process and Tina Jakob for assisting with translation. The conference was made possible through funding from the Internationales Sachsensymposion, the Department of Archaeology and the Institute of Medieval and Early Modern Studies at Durham University. Publication costs have been met by awards from the Institute of Medieval and Modern Studies at Durham, the Department of Archaeology, Durham University, Arscan UMR 7041-Archéologies Environnementales at Université Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne, and The Marc Fitch Fund.

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Abstract

Life on the Edge: Social Political and Religious Frontiers in Early Medieval Europe brings together articles from specialists from across eight countries. Resulting from the 63rd meeting of the Sachsensymposion in Durham in 2012, this volume takes its inspiration from the position of this city close to the Roman frontier, and its instrumental role in the development of early Northumbria. The 7th-century kingdom of Northumbria at times united British, Anglo-Saxon and Pictish populations. To the south, it spanned the old Roman frontier and its legacy of fortifications; to the north, it stretched into modern Scotland. As a consequence Northumbria offers a unique landscape in which to consider issues of frontiers and boundaries, centres and peripheries, and the kinds of events, allegiances, political and religious changes, that helped shape the northern European early medieval identity.
Articles deal with archaeology, art, and at times written sources, and cover the 1st to the 13th centuries AD. Geographically the papers touch on sites and finds from England and Scotland, Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Poland. Articles encompass topics including: trade and exchange at the North Sea edge; the building of linear divisions and defences; central places and production; the delimitation of settlements; religious transition; cultural borders; burial and identity; and the limits between real and imagined worlds.

Zusammenfassung
Leben am Rande: Sozialpolitische und religiöse Grenzen im Europa des Frühmittelalters (*Life on the Edge: Social Political and Religious Frontiers in Early Medieval Europe*) vereint Beiträge von Fachleuten aus acht verschiedenen Ländern. Dieser Band, der aus dem 63. Treffen des Sachsensymposiums in Durham 2012 resultiert, erhält seine Inspiration aus der Lage der Stadt nahe der römischen Grenze und ihrer bedeutenden Rolle in der Entwicklung des frühen Northumbrias. Das Königreich des 7. Jahrhunderts vereinte zeitweise die britische, angelsächsische und piktische Bevölkerungen. Im Süden umfasste es die alte römische Grenze und seine hinterlassenen Befestigungen, im Norden erstreckte sich das Reich bis in das heutige Schottland. Infolgedessen hat Northumbria eine einzigartige Landschaft zu bieten, in der Fragen zu Grenzen und Begrenzungen, Zentren und Periphärien, sowie Ereignissen, Allianzen, politische und religiöse Veränderungen, die halfen die Identität des frühmittelalterlichen Europas zu prägen, gestellt werden können. Die Beiträge befassen sich mit Archäologie, Kunst, und gelegentlich Schriftquellen und umfassen zeitlich das 1.-13. nachchristliche Jahrhundert. Geographisch betrachtet gehen die Beiträge auf Fundstellen und Funde aus England und Schottland, Deutschland, den Niederlanden, Dänemark, Schweden, Norwegen und Polen ein. Thematisch befassen sich die Beiträge mit Handel und Güteraustausch am Rande der Nordsee, dem Bau von linearen Begrenzungen und Befestigungen, Zentralorten und Produktion, der Abgrenzung von Siedlungen, religiösen Übertritten, kulturellen Grenzen, Begräbnis und Identität, und den Grenzen zwischen der realen und imaginären Welten.

Résumé
Life on the Edge: Social Political and Religious Frontiers in Early Medieval Europe rassemble les contributions d'archéologues spécialistes du haut Moyen Âge de huit pays différents. Ce volume est né de leurs échanges lors de la 63e rencontre du Sachsensymposion à Durham en 2012. La proximité de la ville de Durham avec le mur d'Hadrien et son rôle dans le développement du royaume de Northumbrie, a inspiré le thème de cet ouvrage. Ce royaume rassemble et unit, durant le 7e siècle, des populations bretonnes, anglo-saxonne et pictes. Au Sud, il comprend l'ancienne frontière romaine et l'ensemble de ces monuments et forts ; au Nord, il s'étend jusqu'en Écosse. Sa diversité et sa topographie créent un paysage unique qui s'adapte particulièrement bien à l'étude des frontières et des marges, des centres et des périphéries, et en outre, à l'étude des transformations sociales, politiques et religieuses, qui participent à la création de l'identité des groupes sociaux du haut Moyen Âge dans le nord de l'Europe.
Dans cet ouvrage, différentes disciplines se côtoient pour répondre à ces questions, à partir des données archéologiques, de l'histoire de l'art et des sources écrites du 1er au 13e siècle de notre ère. Au niveau géographique, les articles portent sur les sites et les objets d'Angleterre, d'Écosse, d'Allemagne, des Pays-Bas, du Danemark, de Suède, de Norvège et de Pologne. Les discussions portent : sur les échanges autour de la Mer du Nord, les divisions internes des bâtiments et des habitats, les systèmes de défenses, les lieux de pouvoir et de production, les transitions religieuses, les tombes et les questions d'identité, les limites des cadres culturels et les limites entre les mondes du réelle et de l'imaginaire.

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Poles, Ruthenes and Saxons on the River Bug in 1018: The Formation of the Polish-Rus Border Zone in the 10th–13th century

Marcin Wołoszyn

In writing about the Kievan intervention of Boleslaus I (1018), Thietmar of Merseburg (VIII 31) described a battle fought on 22 July on an unnamed river. Thietmar's source of information would have been participants in this campaign: natives of Saxony. Polish and Ruthenian chronicles from the early 12th century describe the events of 1018 in greater detail reporting that the battle took place on the River Bug (*Gallus Anonymus* I 7; *Primary Chronicle* a. 6526 [1018]). The *Primary Chronicle* also records that on his way home from Kiev, Boleslaus occupied the Cherven towns now identified tentatively as the earthworks at Czermno and Gródek on the bank of the River Huczwa a tributary of the Bug. The Cherven towns were an area of rivalry between Piast, Riurikid and, from the 12th century, the Arpad princes.

Research on the formation of the eastern border of Poland and of the Polish-Rus has seen recent revival. In the eastern border area of modern Poland there are several small towns and villages with earthworks which are regarded as the remains of important strongholds established during the medieval period (Fig 1; see Buko 2007; Franklin and Shepard 1996; Lübke 2004a; Samsonowicz 2009 and Mühle 2011). This paper reports on the evidence of the written sources, but also the evidence from archaeological finds from Czermno and Gródek. These settlement complexes both lie in eastern Poland on the bank of the Huczwa; both are identified as major centres of the Cherven towns in the principality of Kievan Rus (Ruthenia).

The inadequate status of research on the Cherven region, or more broadly, on the Polish-Rus border zone is a result of Soviet discouragement and disinterest in the 20th century (see Stobiecki 2011; Wołoszyn 2012) and in 1945–89 there was, in addition, only a single centre for archaeology at a university in eastern Poland — in Lublin. Since 1989, study of the formation of Poland's eastern border region and of the Polish-Rus border zone has considerably improved. A pioneering study was undertaken by Michał Parczewski in 1991 (Parczewski 1991; 2007); and during 1999–2003, I worked with Michał Parczewski as my PhD supervisor, on the small finds of Byzantine and/or Rus provenance of 10th–13th-century date from southern Poland. Since 2008, cooperation between the Leipzig Centre for the History and Culture of East Central Europe (GWZO, Leipzig, Germany) and the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of Polish Academy of Sciences, Cracow-Warsaw, Institute of Archaeology of University of Rzeszów has facilitated much needed research. The project *Vergleichende Untersuchungen zum sozialen, wirtschaftlichen und kulturellen Wandel in den Grenz- und Kontaktzonen Ostmitteleuropas im Mittelalter* or *Comparing medieval boundary regions* was led by Christian Lübke and Matthias Hardt. Further advances were through successive grant funding in 2011 with an exhibition dedicated to the archaeological heritage of Czermno (see Bagińska et al. 2012) and a programme of conservation and scientific analysis of a series of medieval Rus seals from Czermno, notably, Dorogichin-type seals. Further research was grant aided in 2012 by the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education on the stronghold complexes at Czermno and Gródek, focusing on the chronology and function of the Cherven towns (project no 12H 12 0064 81). This multidisciplinary and international venture is implemented by an international team of researchers from Poland, Germany, Russia, Serbia and Ukraine. The results will be published in a Polish-German publication series launched in 2010 and dedicated to early history of East Central Europe: u źródeł europy środkowo-wschodniej / frühzeit ostmitteleuropas.

The present paper summarises past and current research on the Cherven towns. These were significant places, as archaeological artefacts from Czermno and Gródek attest to material evidence on the role of the Byzantine Empire in the formation of eastern parts of Europe. There is no denying that the decades long discussion on the ethnic interpretation of archaeological finds has yet to be resolved (cf Brather 2004; Curta 2011). To speak of 'Polish' belt buckles or 'Rus' arrowheads is an anachronism, but in the present discussion the term 'Polish' is used to denote finds discovered with a greater frequency on the territory of Poland, and much more rarely to the east of Poland. Differences are apparent in the material culture of medieval Poland when compared to medieval Rus, but rather than representing ethnic differences, these can be suggested to stem from the impacts created through the merging of Poland and Rus with Latin and Byzantine power and society.

The Cherven towns: a history

In the summer of 1018 Boleslaus I (†1025), then Duke of Poland, and later its first king, led his troops to his eastern

Figure 1. Major early medieval centres in eastern Poland c AD 1000 against the European background. a: medieval border between Poland and Rus (Makarski 1996, map no 5); b: modern eastern boundary of Poland; c: Kievan Rus c 1000 (Obolensky 1971); d: Byzantium c 1025 (Haldon 2010, map no 8:1). 1: Drohiczyn (Dorogichin), district Siemiatycze, Podlaskie Voivodeship; 2: Chełm (Kholm), district Chełm, Lublin Voivodeship; 3: Gródek (Volyn), district Hrubieszów, Lublin Voivodeship; 4: Sąsiadka (Suteysk), district Zamość, Lublin Voivodeship; 5: Czermno (Cherven), district Tomaszów Lubelski, Lublin Voivodeship; 6: Przemyśl (Peremyshl), district Przemyśl, Podkarpackie Voivodeship; 7: Trepcza, district Sanok, Podkarpackie Voivodeship. Drawing: I. Jordan.

border, making his way to Kiev. Thietmar of Merseburg recorded that:

> 'On [the] 22 July, the duke came to a certain river, where he ordered his army to set up camp and prepare the necessary bridges. Also camped near the river, along with his army, was the King of the Russians [Yaroslav (†1054)]. He was anxiously awaiting the outcome of the upcoming battle, for which both rulers had called. Meanwhile, the Poles provoked the enemy into fighting and, with unexpected success, drove them from the river bank which they were supposed to defend. Elated by this news, Boleslav hastily notified his companions and quickly crossed the river although not without effort. In contrast, the hostile army, drawn up in battle formation, vainly attempted to defend its homeland. It collapsed at the first attack, however, and failed to mount any effective resistance. Among those who fled, many were killed, but only a few of the victors were lost. On our [German, Saxon] side, the dead included Erich, an illustrious miles whom our emperor had long held in chains. From that day on, with every success, Boleslav drove his scattered enemies before him; and the whole populace received and honoured him with many gifts' (*Thietmar* VIII 31, 382–3).

In the *Gesta Principum Polonorum* of Gallus Anonymous, and in the Russian *Primary Chronicle*, both early 12th-century sources, the events of 1018 are described in more detail. We are told that the battle took place on the River Bug (*Gallus* I 7, 45), close to the town of Volyn (this would be today's Gródek; see *Primary Chronicle*..., a 6526 [1018], 221; see Poppe 1958). More importantly, the *Primary Chronicle* also reports that on his way home from Kiev, Boleslaus occupied the Cherven towns. In this way the accounts of three early authors provide us with the first reliable record for the formation of the Polish-Rus border zone.

During the second half of the 10th century, the area between Cracow and the western Bug River was controlled by Czech Přemyslids (*CDB*, no 86, 94; see also Cosmas I 34, 88–9) and in AD 981 Vladimir the Great took control of the Cherven towns (*Primary Chronicle* a 6489 [981], 182). We know little of the tribes that inhabited the region. A document dating to mid-9th-century names them Uislane/Vuislane, identified as Vistulans who are known from other records and places them on the Upper Vistula, whereas the Busani are named and located somewhere along the River Bug (*Descriptio civitatum* 221). The latter are also known to the author of the *Primary Chronicle* which names three tribes in the context of the River Bug, the Buzhans, Volhynians, Dulebs (see *Primary Chronicle*, 23–4). The *Decriptio Civitatum* also refers to the Lendizi or Lendians (in Polish: Lędzianie) who are said to have less than 98 civitates or strongholds/stronghold districts, without specific information on their location. If we accept that this group can be identified with the tribe Lendzaninoi/Lendzeninoi mentioned by the Byzantine Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (Constantine Porphyrogenitus, IX, 57, XXXVII, 169), it is possible that the Lendians inhabited the area to the east of the territory of the Vistulans, which presumably included also the lands on the River Bug. In East Slavic languages (but also in Lithuanian and in Hungarian) the term Lach (Lyakh, and other variations) refers to ethnic Poles and Poland. Most likely it goes back to the ethnonym Lędzianie, similarly as the name of Germany in French (Allemagne) is derived from the name of the Germanic tribe of the Alemanni who were situated in south-western Germany close to the border with Gaul (see Parczewski 2007).

According to the record entered in the *Primary Chronicle* for the year AD 981, Vladimir had wrested towns of Peremyshl, Cherven and others from the Lyakhs, which territory at the time of writing — as the chronicler was happy to note — still remained under Rurikid rule (*Primary Chronicle* a 6489 [981], 182). At present it is accepted that the Lyakhs should not be read as synonymous with Poles; rather, the name referred to the tribe or confederation of the Lendians, whose territory was in the upper reaches of the Bug, Styr, Dniester rivers, the rim of the Carpathian foothills and the lands on the San and the Wisłoka rivers. During the second half of the 10th century the territory of the Lendians lay within a zone of Czech and Ruthenian influence. In this case Vladimir's campaign would have been prompted by his wish to restore Ruthenian rule over this territory, if only a part of it (see Labuda 1981; 2005, 20). It seems, therefore, that during the second half of the 10th century the border of Poland (the domain of the Piasts) ran west of the River Bug.

Following the death of Vladimir the Great in 1015, the campaign of 1018 added the Cherven towns region to the Piast domain (*Primary Chronicle* a 6526 [1018], 221; see Salamon 1993; Poppe 1995; Labuda 2005, 23). In 1031 the Cherven towns changed hands once again, returned to Riurikid rule (*Primary Chronicle* a 6539 [1031], 225; Labuda 2005, 29), and broadly remained so during the 12th to 14th century (see Kuczyński 1965; Rhode 1955; Lübke 2003, 2004b). Following the alliance made between Casimir the Great (†1370), king of Poland and Lithuania under the Jagiellon dynasty, Poland-Lithuania became the key player in this part of Europe. Around the mid-14th century Casimir the Great captured the Cherven towns (see Wünsch and Janeczek 2004; Janeczek 2011) and they have remained in Polish territory to the modern day.

In the review of the archaeology and history of the Cherven towns and other archaeological sites below, early Rus names are used next to the modern Polish names: Drohiczyn and Dorogichin, Chełm and Kholm, Czermno and Cherven, Gródek and Volyn, Sąsiadka and Suteysk, Przemyśl and Peremyshl. Only the stronghold surviving as a hillfort at the village Trepcza near Sanok must remain nameless.

The Cherven towns: past and current archaeological research

The Cherven towns were subject to excavation in 1940, in 1952–55, in 1976–79, 1985 and finally in 1997, and most findings were not published, but the results of work carried out by Lev Chykalenko at Czermno in summer 1940 were subsequently published during the 1990s (Chykalenko 1998). Only the team of Konrad Jażdżewski who excavated a small area at Czermno in 1952 published a full report (Abramowicz

1959; Jażdżewski 1959; Zbierski 1959). During these decades no major plan of research was developed on the Polish-Rus borderland. Of the material recovered at Gródek (1952–55) only the Neolithic finds were published in monographic form (see Jastrzębski 1991; on Roman finds from Gródek, see Kokowski 1993). The early medieval and medieval stronghold cemetery was acknowledged only in brief reports (Kuśnierz 2012). In 1983 a warrior burial furnished with a sword and a quiver was recovered at Gródek and published soon afterwards (Jastrzębski and Maciejczuk 1988; Kozak-Zychman 1988). The sword, inscribed +INHOMEFECT+ and +INGELII [?] RMEFCIT+ may be dated to the second half of the 12th century or the beginning of the 13th century (see Kuśnierz 2006). At Czermno in the 1970s research, led by Jan Gurba, focused on the earthwork and rampart and adjacent settlements and discovered a system of causeways linking individual parts of the settlement complex (Fig 3), but only selected small finds and several general studies were published although a number of unpublished MA theses have analysed some of the findings (see Gurba 1980/81). Timber samples secured by Jan Gurba and Andrzej Urbański from the causeways and the rampart at Czermno in 1997 were analysed by Marek Krąpiec (Fig 3, points A–D). Dendrochronological dates obtained for the causeways suggest that these were installed not later than in the mid-13th century. But the case of the rampart is different — the earliest dates secured from this structure lead to the conclusion '…that the analysed samples come from trees felled at the end of the first half of the 11th century, possibly later' (Urbański 2000, 242). This implies the stronghold was built after AD 1000 and cannot be the Cherven referred to in the *Primary Chronicle*. Elżbieta Kowalczyk questioned the reliability of the dates (Kowalczyk 2000, 60–2). Others have argued that Czermno is deliberately sited during the final quarter of the 11th century in a move to locate the Cherven towns east of the River Bug (Tyszkiewicz 2004, 195). The location of the samples dated in 1997 remains uncertain and thus may not represent the earliest phase of stronghold fortification system (Urbański 2000, 242). Thus arguments for the chronology of the complex at Czermno remain inconclusive (see Poleski 2011, 353–4). Although unreliable, however, the dates have entered into scientific circulation: to the extent that Czermno was struck off a list of 10th-century sites in a discussion on the fortifications on the Huczwa. In 2010, new investigations were initiated by the Lublin centre by Marcin Piotrowski and Andrzej Kokowski, who started to investigate at Czermno using metal detectors. This is not a method which can replace regular archaeological fieldwork, but the archaeologists from the Lublin centre decided to adopt the method as Czermno was in danger from treasure hunters.

The Cherven towns: the sites

Gródek

The early medieval settlement complex at Gródek, some 15 hectares in area, consists of the relics of a fortified settlement (a stronghold) and a number of open settlements (Fig 2). The ramparts of the medieval stronghold were lost in some places to WWI and WWII ditches and artillery trenches. An inhumation cemetery was identified inside the earthwork, with a total of 466 graves. Forty-two graves contained furnishings: bronze buttons, fragments of textiles, earrings, finger-rings, sheet metal appliqués, crosses and beads. These ornaments

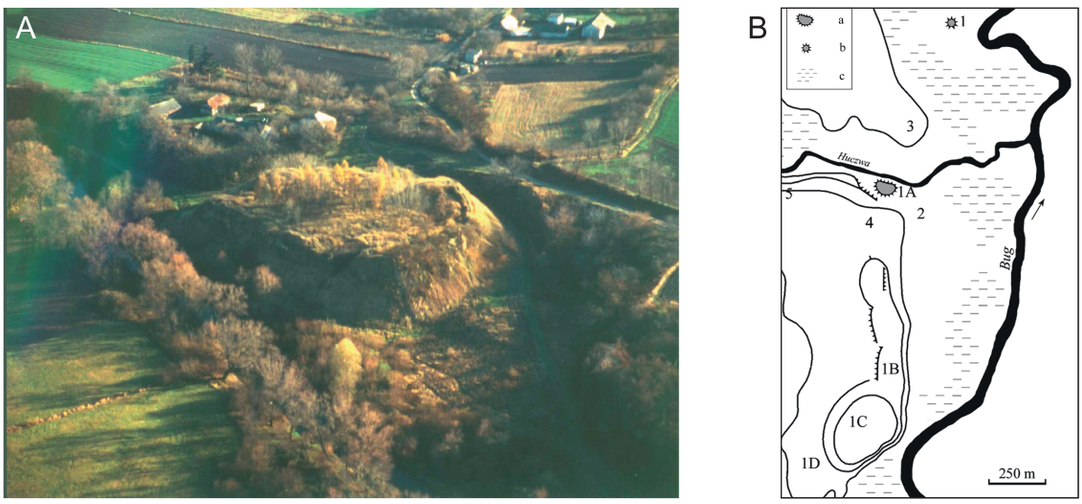

Figure 2. (A) Gródek (Volyn), district Hrubieszów, Lublin Voivodeship, Poland. Photograph: S, Orłowski. (B) The settlement complex; a: the earthwork (with the cemetery within the compound); b: Księżycowa Mogiła barrow; c: marshy area; 1–5: number of archaeological sites (1: Księżycowa Mogiła barrow; 1A: earthwork; 1C: site Bocian). Drawing by J. Ożóg after Kuśnierz 2012, fig 2.

Figure 3. (A) Czermno (Cherven), district Tyszowce, Lublin Voivodeship, Poland. Photograph: S, Orłowski. (B) The settlement complex; a: early medieval settlements; b: medieval causeways; c: the rampart enclosing the settlement complex from the south; d: inhumation cemeteries; e: marshy area; f: reconstructed river channel of the Siniucha prior to the 1960s drainage works. Drawing: J. Ożóg after Florek 2012, fig 1.

are forms which have parallels mostly in finds recorded on the territory of Kievan Rus. The cemetery at Gródek was in use 12th(?)/13th–14th centuries and possibly even through to the 15th century (cf Kuśnierz 2012). The grave pits intruded on features dating from an earlier phase of occupation of the stronghold: the remains of dwellings, settlement pits, ovens and a smithy.

In 2008 the regional museum in Hrubieszów added some 550 archaeological objects that derived from Gródek to its collections, all recovered from illegal metal-detecting. All of them have now been recorded. These include ornaments and dress accessories, weapons and, last but not least, lead seals, including Dorogichin-type seals and devotional objects (encolpia, cross-pendants, small metal icons; see Fig 4). This material dates to the 11th–14th centuries, and possibly the early 15th century.

Czermno

The complex at Czermno consists of the remains of a stronghold, established on a well-drained holm at the confluence of the Huczwa River and its small tributary the Siniucha, and of a group of open settlements lying on the marshy bank of the Huczwa. There are more of these open settlements to the north of the Huczwa River. The area of the entire complex is estimated between approximately 75 and 150 hectares; a part of this area is marshy and waterlogged (Fig 3). To the west of the earthwork, separated by a tract of lower lying ground, is a fortified suburb settlement closest to the stronghold (Czermno site 2). To this day no reliable traces of a cemetery datable to the period from the 6th to 10th century have been identified, but to the west of the earthwork is a cemetery with inhumation burials which remains uninvestigated. In 1985 remains of a timber causeways were recovered north-west of the earthwork which presumably linked open settlements established on the holms rising within the marshy valley of the Huczwa; these were dendro-dated to the 12th to 13th century.

A horizontal stratigraphic survey was undertaken at Czermno in 2010 and 2011, resulting in the recording of some 2500 archaeological objects (see Piotrowski and Wołoszyn 2012), including 404 Dorogichin-type seals which are likely to have been used in commerce. In addition, 20 lead seals, 20 encolpia, 21 metal cross-pendants, 23 axe-heads, 104 arrowheads and several hundred ornaments and dress accessories were recovered, and six glass bracelet fragments. Two extraordinary hoards of early medieval jewellery were also discovered inside the stronghold, about 20 m apart (Fig 5). Hoard no 1 was deposited in a pottery vessel which held: four bracelets (two cuff and two spiral specimens, the latter plain, with tapered terminals), two earrings, two kolts, two rings and 19 complete (and a few fragmented) sheet silver appliqués from a headdress (cap or headband) which survived as a fragment of textile with sewn on miniature glass beads. Hoard no 2 was discovered resting within a layer of turf, presumably buried in haste by its owner, possibly wrapped in a piece of leather, textile or placed in a wooden container which did not survive. This deposit included a plain spiral bracelet with tapered terminals, two kolts, four earrings and a large decorative bead.

The kolts, the richly ornamented cuff bracelets and the earrings (type with 'three baskets'), have many parallels in deposits from the territory of Kievan Rus. It is notable that the bracelets and earrings are very similar to finds from Czermno that were present in a hoard discovered in 1974 at Sokal in Ukraine, only 30 km in a straight line from Czermno (Petegirich 2010). Plain bracelets with tapered terminals appear to be the youngest element in the two hoards from Czermno: analogical forms are known from hoards discovered at Myropil (Korzukhina 1954, 134 [cat no 137], fig 19) and Kiev (Korzukhina 1954, 109 [cat no 71]), from Voineşti (Teodor 1964, 246, fig 1) and Demidiv (Zarubiy 2009, cat nos 10–13). More relevant is the deposit from Demidiv dated by coins of Wenceslaus II of Bohemia (1271–1305) and John of Luxembourg (1296–1346; see Kotlar 1975, cat no 38). An overview of the two hoards from Czermno suggests they may have been deposited largely at the time of the Mongol threat in mid-13th century. These closed assemblages are dated by the youngest forms present in them: plain bracelets with tapered ends place the time of deposition of the two hoards from Czermno to the period between the middle and the end of 13th and possibly early 14th century.

An even more remarkable group of finds are the lead and Dorogichin-type seals. Finds of seals from the Byzantine-Rus environment on the territory of Piast Poland are few (Wołoszyn 2009, fig 1). Lead seals were issued by the Piast only sporadically and when discovered (recently in Greater Poland and Mazovia), they attract considerable attention (see Suchodolski 2011). In the Byzantine-Rus zone (differently from the Latin part of East Central Europe) seals were mass produced: in the collection of Harvard University there are 17,000 Byzantine seals and their total number (in collections across the world) is estimated at around 60,000 (Nesbitt 2008). Byzantine seals were brought to the territory of Kievan Rus in great numbers, and seals were commonly produced for the secular and ecclesiastical authorities in Rus itself (Yanin 1970; Yanin and Gaydukov 1998).

In this context the discoveries at Czermno are no surprise: material culture of the Cherven towns in many aspects has a Rus or a Byzantine-Rus character, and the relatively numerous seal finds confirm this. Two specimens have a Greek obverse inscription: '+K[úpι]ε βο[ήδει] τω σω δ[ο]úλω Δα[βι] δ αρχοντι 'Ρωσίας', translated as 'Lord, come to the aid of your servant David the Archon of Rus'. The reverse image is that of Prophet David, a scroll of psalms in his left hand, his right upraised in blessing. Until recently this seal type was known from the earthwork at Sąsiadka and from

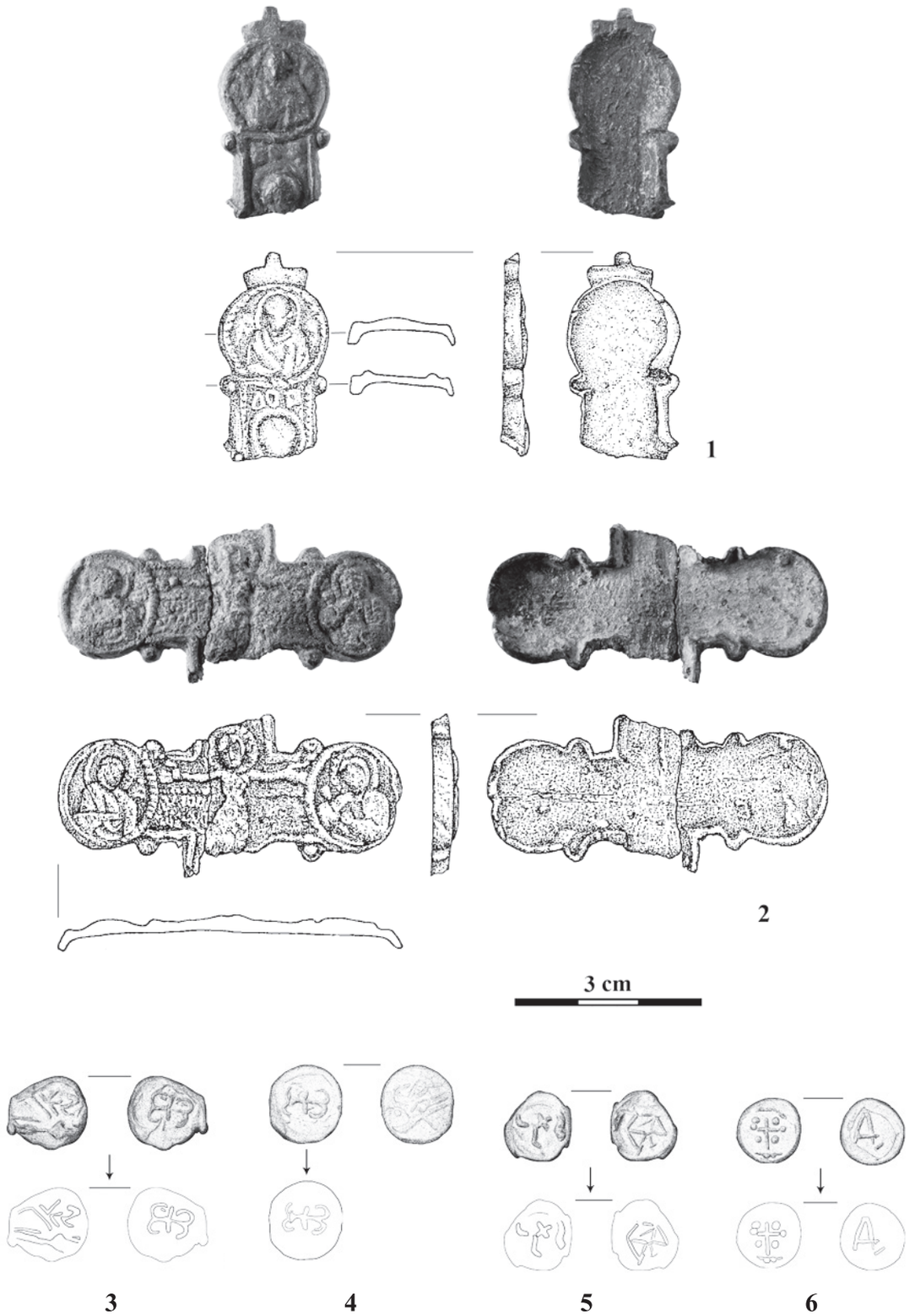

Figure 4. Selected stray finds from Gródek (Volyn), district Hrubieszów, Lublin Voivodeship, Poland. (1–2) Encolpia. (3–6) Dorogichin-type seals. Drawings: R. Janicki, E. Osipowa, J. Ożóg, U. Potyrała; St Staszic Museum, Hurbieszów.

Figure 5. Hoard nos 1 and 2 from Czermno (Cherven), district Tyszowce, Lublin Voivodeship, Poland, after conservation treatment and reconstruction (October 2011). Photograph: K. Wasilczyk.

Volodymyr-Volynskyi. At Czermno at least two such have been discovered (Fig 6.2–3). Two dukes of this name are known from 11th century Rus: Davyd Sviatoslavich (†1123) and Davyd Igorevich. Analysis of their political activity persuades us to attribute the seal from Czermno (and also those from Sąsiadka and Volodymyr-Volynskyi) to Davyd Igorevich which dates them to 1084–1112.

An equally interesting group are Dorogichin-type seals (Fig 7). The function of these small objects (diam c 10 mm) — fashioned from two pieces of lead pressed together, presumably with a string in between — is still unresolved. Both the obverse and the reverse are, with the ducal insignia, schematic depictions of saints or animals, similarly the seals of bulla type. Their most likely interpretation is that of commercial seals. Until recently as much as 80% of this group were specimens from Drohiczyn: 12,000 recovered from the waters of the River Bug between 1864 and the early 20th century. Close details of the site and discovery were lacking, but analysis of 19th/20th-century documentation preserved in Petersburg has brought crucial results: the seals are now known to have been discovered some distance downstream from the castle (Nosov and Musin 2009, 898–9; see also Musin 2012; the same may be said of Beloozero; see Zakharov 2005). Having analysed finds of Dorogichin seals 15 years ago, Valeryj B. Perchavko listed 40 localities with these finds including single finds from Volga Bulgaria and Lithuania and the remainder from the territory of Kievan Rus and its northern region (Perkhavko 1996).

In this context the finds from Czermno take on special meaning. The vast majority of seals surfaced not within the earthwork but in the suburban settlements, in the marshy valley of the Huczwa River, clustering outside the stronghold. The latest studies of seals on Byzantine and Rus territory have demonstrated convincingly that, rather than with the circulation of official documents (letters, etc.), these objects were associated with the functioning of ports (for sealing commodities). In view of Czermno's position on the bank of the Huczwa, on the route running from Kiev to Cracow to Prague and Regensburg, the seals reveal the strategic significance of the site.

Both Czermno and Gródek were bypassed by the process of urbanism of the 14th and 15th centuries and the role of local centres was taken over by Tyszowce and Hrubieszów respectively. Today both Czermno and Gródek are small villages. Archaeological evidence, however, has proved that in the early medieval period these centres were more than military watchtowers: the number of devotionals (Fig 8), lead seals and Dorogichin-type seals persuades us to treat them as local centres of the Polish-Rus border zone, vast settlement complexes of major commercial importance. In view of the

Figure 6. Selected lead seals from Czermno (Cherven), district Tyszowce, Lublin Voivodeship, Poland, after conservation. (1) The seal with obverse inscription +ДЬНѢСЛОВО, and reverse representation of Saint John the Baptist, Yaroslav, ruler in Volhynia (1100–18). (2–3) Seals with the representation of Prophet David, Davyd Igorevich († 1112). (4–5) Seals with reverse representation of St Basil the Great (of Caesarea), or possibly, Archangel Michael or Gabriel, Ryurik Rostislavich († 1215). Photograph: M. Wołoszyn.

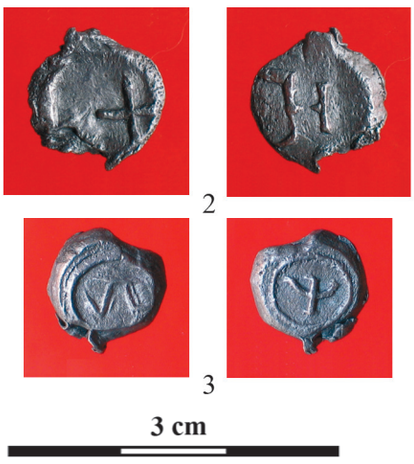

Figure 7. Selected Dorogichin-type seals from Czermno (Cherven), district Tyszowce, Lublin Voivodeship, Poland, after conservation. Photograph: M. Wołoszyn.

references to the Cherven towns (and of Czermno itself) found in the *Primary Chronicle*, the matter of the 10th-century chronology of the ramparts at Czermno (and at Gródek too) is fundamental. So far the number of finds dating to the 9th to 11th century is rather small.

The forgotten Cherven towns and the making of Europe

Current understanding of the archaeology and history of the Cherven towns remains partial. Nevertheless, the rich diversity of archaeological objects which have surfaced at Gródek and Czermno demonstrate a preponderance of finds with Rus or Byzantine provenance. In the 11th to 13th centuries, the region under consideration was Rus rather than Polish in character. What is striking in the archaeological record from Czermno and Gródek is the sheer quantity of devotional objects, and seals, including the Dorogichin type. This would suggest that

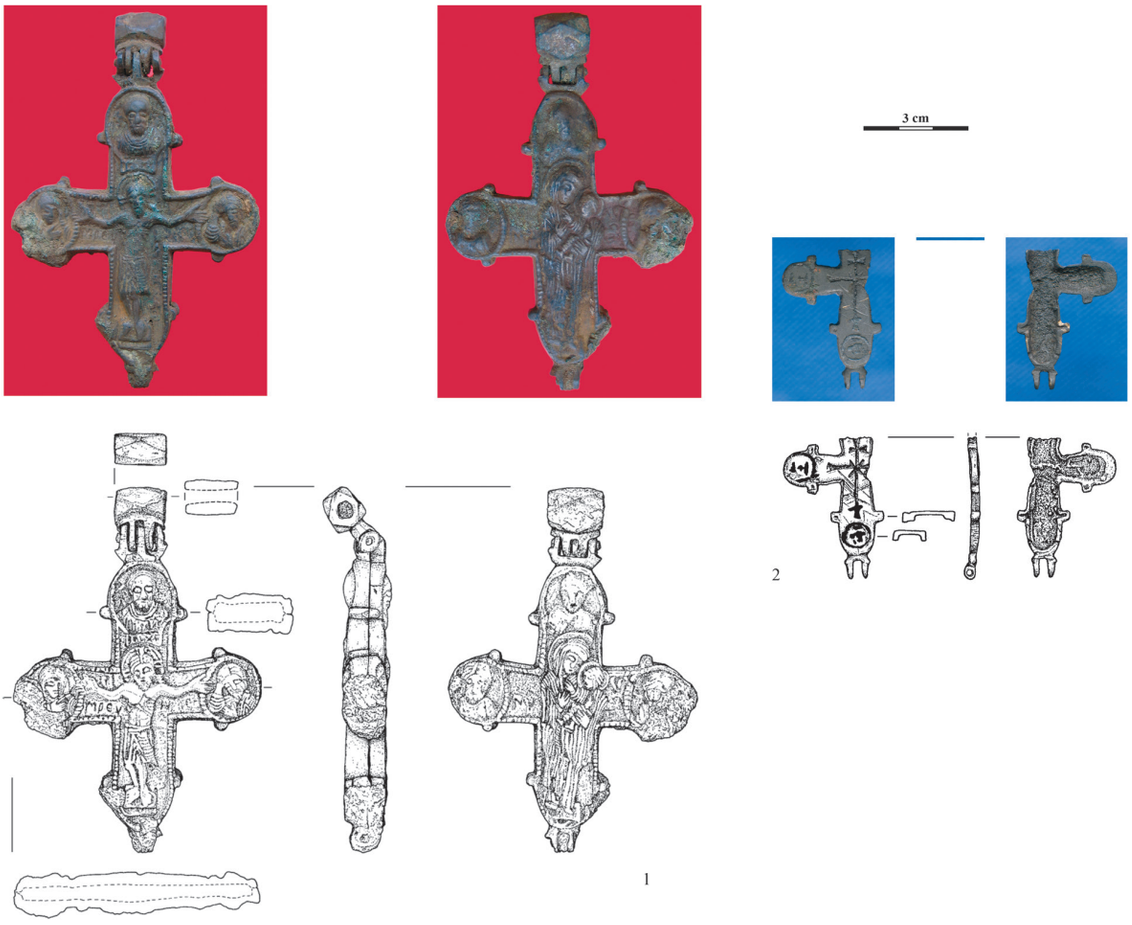

Figure 8. Selected devotional objects (encolpia) from Czermno (Cherven), district Tyszowce, Lublin Voivodeship, Poland. Photograph: M. Wołoszyn; drawing: J. Ożóg.

the Cherven towns played a significant role in commercial exchange between Rus and the countries of Central Europe.

The conversion of Bohemia, Poland and Rus opened the territories of the northern Slav tribes to the influence of lands with a more advanced civilisation. Latin culture was introduced to Bohemia and Poland indirectly, through German ecclesiastics, but Christianity and Romanitas were brought directly to the Rus by the Byzantine Empire. Even if Kievan Rus, unlike the Slav kingdoms in the Balkans (Bulgaria, Serbia), was never a subject of the Byzantine Empire the decision taken by Vladimir the Great in 988/989 to embrace eastern Christianity opened up the area of his Kievan principality to the impact of Byzantine culture, not only spiritually but also materially (see Musin and Wołoszyn 2012). If we consider the adoption in Rus of sophisticated technologies (mostly in art), and the spread and proliferation of objects associated with religious devotion, we can make the claim that Rus had entered the sphere of the Byzantine Commonwealth (for this term see Obolensky 1971; see also Meyendorff 1993; Poppe 1980; for Dymitr Obolensky and his idea of Byzantine Commonwealth, see Shepard 2006). And this means that the Cherven towns were more than just a contact area between the Latin Poles and the Orthodox population of Kievan Rus. They were also a western outlying province of the Byzantine world and owed their prosperity to the influence of this civilisation.

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