



On Ancient Lechitic-Polish History - From the Perspective of Hopology

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Abstract

For many years, there has been a scholarly dispute concerning the prehistory of the Slavs, particularly the West Slavs, also known as Lechites – after the name of the linguistic group and the legendary King Lech. Proponents of the allochthonous theory (hypothesis?) claim that the Slavs arrived in present-day Poland only in the 6th century. Proponents of the autochthonous theory, however, believe that the ancestors of today's Poles lived here since antiquity. A new book by Wojciech [1] and research results published in recent years support the thesis of the ancient inhabitation of these lands by Slavs, also known as Lechites.

In this article, the author draws on the contents of the aforementioned book and the latest archaeogenetic, linguistic, and hopological research. Their results, along with logical deduction/logical evidence, falsify – in the author's opinion – the first of the paradigms.

Key Words: Western Slavs; *Słowiańszczyzna*; Lechitic lands; Modern Hopology

Introduction

A monograph devoted to the history of Polish lands and their inhabitants – the direct ancestors of today's Poles – has been published. It covers the period from around 2000 BC, when the history of Polish statehood (Christian Kingdom of Poland) begins only in the 10th century AD. The author's intention was to write this small contribution to Slavic antiquity, including the direct ancestors of today's Poles [1].

The arrival of warriors called Araines (R1a as the dominant haplogroup) to Polish lands took place from the east and south, as shown by [2]. It was around 2000 BC. The Satem language, the original Ario-Slavic or Proto-Slavic, emerged. From that time on, the self-identification of the inhabitants of the Proto-Indo-European Corded Ware culture could have begun, resulting in the emergence of subsequent cultures - Lusatian, Miłogród. Also, at that time (ca.

2000 BCE), the "Polish" haplogroup hg R-M417 emerged [3] and since then there has been genetic continuity in the population living in Poland [4]. While warrior migrations took place in both directions between Carantania and Pannonia in the territory of present-day Poland, larger migrations took place until the 7th-8th centuries AD mainly to the south (Adriatic Sea, Greece) and to the east.

Generational, intergenerational transmission takes place in the warrior cultures known to us traditionally from father to son, which in the cultural phenomenon of martial arts functions to this day [5]. This is a cultural transmission (patterns and values), but also biological, recorded in DNA. Therefore, it seems justified to study genetic transmission, especially in the male line (Y-DNA and haplogroup / hg).

In the countries of East Asia (China, Japan, Korea) and Southeast Asia (Thailand), their national martial arts and combat sports are still cultivated as an important part of cultural heritage, a source of national pride and identity, as well as an export product. In Poland, on the other hand, the continuity of the transmission of national military traditions was interrupted by partitions and annexations, occupation and Sovietization. However, at least until 1945, the chivalric ethos, the moral strength of the old Polish tradition, actually functioned and allowed survival in the fight against two totalitarianisms. In Ukraine, the Cossack tradition helps to this day in the fight against imperial Russia. Perhaps this ethos strength is more important to the nation than the cult of weapons, individual fighting skills and the preservation of traditions from the area of martial arts.

According to the author, the warrior ethos present today in Asian martial arts (budō, taekwondo) or in chivalric and derivative traditions (Signum Polonicum, combat hopak) has Indo-European roots, or more precisely – Aryan-Slavic. The transfer of this ethos was described in a book on the philosophy of martial arts [6], but Indian roots were also indicated by [7,8].

The basis for considerations here was especially GTFA / General Theory of Fighting Arts, the history of physical culture, modern hopology and anthropology of martial arts. In this approach, training is treated holistically, and fighting – systemically [9]. In particular, the “warrior culture” and the people, community and nation, as carriers of this culture, are also important. The focus here is on the person and the community, and only in second place on weapons and armour, military organisation and appropriate social institutions.

Striving for classically understood truth, for example about the roots of today’s Poles, requires putting forward hypotheses, and their verification requires interpretation based on sources (with their deficit) and logical deduction (by way of logical proof). In this process, some concepts may turn out to be wrong.

What do we Know in Light of the Latest Research?

It is good that there is still a scientific discussion on the origins of our direct ancestors. For example, on June 27-28, 2024, an international conference entitled “In Search of the Origin of the Slavs” was held at the headquarters of the Museum of the First Piasts in Lednica. The meeting was organized by the Faculty of Archaeology, the Faculty of History of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and the Museum of the First Piasts in Lednica. “The main theme of the conference was an attempt to take a synthetic look at issues related to the origins of the Slavs, their settlements, the development of culture and economy. The speakers were not limited to archaeological or historical sources. The results of natural and linguistic research were also presented.” [10].

Generally, civilizations of various peoples developed on the basis of warrior cultures - first nomadic, then settled, which is

studied on the basis of history, hopology and cultural anthropology. In this authors book [1], the area of research mainly concerned Polish and neighboring lands. In turn, physical fitness, necessary for mastering combat skills and other combat skills (especially equestrianism / horse riding), is an area of interest for physical culture sciences. In addition, physical fitness and combat prowess, confirmed by victorious battles, is of interest to GTFA / General Theory of Fighting Arts.

In the situation of the persistent belief that the Slavs appeared late, no ancient evidence of their existence was even sought. This erroneous thesis resulted in the fact that linguistics also failed to take into account the fact that the Aryan-Slavic languages are the oldest of the Indo-European languages, in a sense Proto-Indo-European, and therefore much older than Celtic, Iranian or Germanic.

Is it justified to derive Slavic Lands from the Vinča culture? Here, for example, Harald Haarmann finds non-Indo-European “Old European people”. But wasn’t this oldest European civilization developed in the Danube Valley really a contributor to the Slavic culture? [11] writes that the cultural heritage of Old Europe is, among other things, “folklore, with the hora or kolo dance”, etc. But don’t hora / góra and kolo / koło sound familiar to Slavic languages?

One can agree with the trichotomous nature of the origin of Slavic culture – through the combination of Northern Thrace, Western Iranian (Scythian) and Balto-Slavic elements. According to M. Alinei, the Thracians and Dacians were Romanized Slavic-Scythians. The author believes that the Araini (possessors of haplogroup R1a) dominated the Thracian population, in which hg E could have originally dominated.

The beginnings of Slavic communities or perhaps first Proto-Slavic ones were formed between 4500 BC, when nomads called by A. Klyosov “Araini” (possessors of haplogroup R1a1 Y-DNA) appeared in the vicinity of Varna and on the Danube, and 2000 BC, i.e. the time when the same researcher indicated above writes directly about Slavs [12]. This fact is gradually being reflected in historical references to various issues, for example in the field of the history of ideas and political doctrines. As [13] points out: <<Perhaps Western Slavs began to separate in the 2nd-1st millennium BC, but the outlines of the division into Eastern and Western Slavs were not recorded until the beginning of our era. They were united by language, an understandable “word”. The basis of their distinctiveness were the connections resulting from the common inhabitation of given lands, in our case in the Baltic Sea basin, i.e. in the Oder and Vistula basins.>> It is satisfying that the editorial office of a certain specialist scientific periodical asked the author for a review article on the current state of knowledge about the early beginnings of the Lechites and Poles, which was published without any problems [1,14].

It can be assumed that around 4000 BC from the Vistula (according to the previously cited research by P. Underhill’s team)

or also from the area east of the Vistula, those Indo-Europeans / Aryans emerged, who initiated the Aryan branch (hg R1a-Z93) of the clan, and the rest are those who are the direct ancestors of today's Slavs, especially the Western ones. [15] derives his considerations from the "prehistoric period", writing about the democracy of war, the organization of the army and types of weaponry according to facts and linguistic analyses. The warrior ethos and the institutionalization of functions (banner, oath, hero; *кнѣдзъ* / *vojevoda* – military leader, *voivode*) appeared quite early here.

Of course, genetics (biology) is not synonymous with ethnicity, language and culture. However, in many cases such correlation occurs. Luigi Luca Cavalli-Sforza suggested there is the link between Y-DNA and languages. The publication *Cultural Transmission and Evolution: A Quantitative Approach* [Cavalli-Sforza, Feldman 1981] [16] made use of models from population genetics and infectious disease epidemiology to investigate the transmission of culturally transmitted units, such as for instance language. This concept is appreciated by researchers [17]. In addition, archaeogenetic studies allow us to determine migration routes and the facts of settlement of a given area at a given time [3,4,18,19] and since then there has been genetic continuity in the population living in Poland.

Proto-Indo-Europeans (with dominant hg R1a1), using a satem language, can be identified with proto-Slavs (Suevi / Sueves, Wends / Veneti) and the ancestors of the Aryans (Hari / Hariowie). In turn, in the case of the later mutation R1b ("Arbins") and the kintum languages used by the Arbins, calling them Indo-Europeans is unjustified. They had virtually nothing in common with India. It can be assumed that terminology in linguistics requires changes, as does dating the beginnings of Slavs, especially the Western Slavs called Lechites (Lechitic languages). The Arbins - Italiki, Celts, Gauls - are generally recognized as an ancient people. Meanwhile, the Araines, as evidence and premises cited in the book show, are an older people, both biologically (genetically) and culturally (linguistically). This applies to both the Aryans, Scythians and Slavs, whose language and culture are probably 1,000 years older than the Germanic ones. Germania or Alemania itself are geographical terms referring to the areas east of the Main and originally inhabited mainly by Slavs and pre-Indo-European people. The Main River was the border of Gaul (Arbins) and the area dominated by the Araines.

If A – the original Slavic language is older than the Germanic languages; B – anthropological and genetic studies have confirmed the continuity of settlement of Polish lands; can we not conclude, by simple logical deduction (conjunction and implication), that, for example, the Luggi League concerned Lechitic tribes, not Germanic ones, and that, for example, the Vandals (both Lechites from Lech, and Vandalites from Wanda, the daughter of King Krak I) were also most probably a Slavic people?

$$A \cap B = C$$

If the continuity of settlement has been established, how can we explain the sudden Slavicization of the Goths and Vandals, who would have been East Germanic-speaking? Were Germanic

peoples really dominant in the lands of today's Poland in the 1st-5th centuries AD [20,21]? Based on historical sources, one can conclude that the Slavs multiplied suddenly and occupied half of Europe, or imposed their language on the world of that time, which supposedly did not exist before. It is therefore also worth reaching for archaeogenetics, linguistic analyses and logical deduction [22].

If the Slavs and the Scythians (Scolotes) come from the same proto-Aryan or Ario-Slavic root, then the Scythians should be biologically and linguistically classified as satem Slavs rather than Iranian peoples. Haarmann points to the ethos of these horse warriors, which was also respected by the Greeks [6,23]. This German researcher believes that the Scythians influenced the language and culture of the Slavs [24]. He gives an example of the Scythian word *topor*, which is identical in Russian and Ukrainian [23]. But this word also sounds very similar in Polish (*topór*). Couldn't this result from the common origin of the Scythians and the Slavs? Also, the numerals and the Scythian declension of the pronoun 'ty': *ty, tebe, ti, tę, tobojo, tebě* indicate similarity to the original Slavic language, and the Proto-Slavic wealth of words related to horse breeding and horse riding may indicate a community of peoples with the genetic haplogroup indicated above as dominant [25].

In antiquity, in addition to the Scythians, the Medes and Parthians, as well as those Aryans who dominated India and remained in the highest castes (Brahmins and Kshatriyas), and the Pashtuns from Afghanistan, made significant contributions. It is significant that they were brothers of the ancient Lechites (a conventional name for these brave people, the direct ancestors of today's Poles). This concerns biological (genetic, according to hg R1a1 Y-DNA), linguistic, religious and – generally – cultural affinities. After all, Jan Długosz identified the territory of Lechia and Greater Scythia in his Chronicle.

"Mithra's chariot, horseback - like Indra, also on foot; gods and heroes, warriors and adventurers carried the Aryan ethos east and south to Iran and India. But from the main, common Indo-European branch of the people with the genetic haplogroup R1a1 using the proto-Aryan-Slavic language, other ethos of warriors also developed. After the passage of the Aryans, the Scythian state came into being, associated with the Lusatian archaeological culture, most likely Slavic." [6].

The Veneti (Latin: *Venedae*) settled far to the west of the Baltic islands of Wolin, Uznam and Rugia. For example, today's Dutch Utrecht was probably founded on the site of an ancient Slavic stronghold. It is less important what we will call our ancestors today – Wendowie, Wendowie, Wenetowie, Wenedzi, Veneti, or how to formulate adjectives – wendish, wenedyjski? If Juliusz Słowacki called his poem "Lilla Weneda", then maybe "wenedyjski" is the best term here, to stay in line with this great Polish poet and bard.

From Archaeogenetics to Hopology

How similar was the Slavic warrior (*woj*) to the Scythian warrior? The chariot was a weapon of open spaces. In forested

terrain, fighting was more common on foot, but cavalry was also used. The spear and battle axe were preferred to the costly sword.

"The well-known record of Prokopos of Caesarea about Slavs fighting half-naked (without armor and without a shirt) is an illustration of the ethos of courage of Slavic warriors. It is not about the lack of defensive armament, but about deliberate non-use of it, in order to show the bravery and contempt of death or also faith in one's own abilities and God's favour [26]. Gives a series of historical examples (from the 6th-11th centuries) illustrating this thesis. Is it not an echo of earlier traditions and the Ario-Slavic [Aryan-Slavic] ethos? Moreover, does Indra's personal detachment of 300 saints warriors, according to the Vedic records, do not resemble the division of the Lechite army into units of 30, 300 or 3,000 warriors?" [6,26].

It can be concluded that around 3800 BC in the Vistula River basin there was a mutation of R1a M458 to R1a Z282 and R1a Z93 [27], and then the Araines expanded from the territories of present-day Poland – from around 3250 BC to the West and North, and around 3000 BC – to the East. In the steppes between the Volga and the territory of present-day Mongolia, archaeological cultures called Andronovo and Tocharian began to develop. Before 1500 BC, representatives of these cultures headed south – to Afghanistan, India and Iran.

On the Ruda Web blog [28] we find the following statement: "(...) it is increasingly certain that the Slavs are attributed to the Unetice culture (2300-1600 BC). Sites of this culture are known from the areas of Moravia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Germany, and in Poland from Silesia, Greater Poland, the Lubusz Land, Pomerania and Kuyavia. In the majority of this area, the Lusatian culture emerged and developed in the following centuries. Both it and the preceding Unetice Corded Ware culture are - according to the latest findings - also Slavic civilizations." And new excavations seem to confirm this [29].

What has been preserved from the centuries-old Scythian culture and tradition to this day? Are there only treasures and other artifacts in museums, kurgans and graves [30]? Or only some trace in the song and dance of Ruslana Łżyczko ("Wild Dances")? Or only the weapons preferred by the Scythians, such as the nadziak, later popular in both the Polish cavalry banners and the Cossack infantry? Or is it perhaps also a love of horses and the warrior ethos? "A weapon with a curved blade was very popular among the nomadic steppe tribes, (...) Such weapons were also used by the Scythians." [31]. And the szabla - Polish sabre is still a symbol of Polish arms today. It is also subject to serious weapons research [32].

It is quite widely accepted that it was not until the 9th century AD that the Slavs learned the writing (Glagolitic). Meanwhile, this script could have been an improved version of the earlier known script. Since the Aryans, coming from the same root, created Sanskrit, and its original, Vedic version is dated to the 15th century

BCE, the written transmission of knowledge was probably even older. However, Haarmann claims that earlier (before arriving in India) "Kultur der Indo-Arien über tausend Jahre lang schriftlos" (Indo-Aryan culture was illiterate for over a thousand years), and only on the territory of this subcontinent was the existing script derived from Aramaic adopted [33]. These issues are difficult to resolve. Researchers from India argue for the local origin of writing, religion and other components of their present culture. However, the ethos and religious content, as well as the genetic and linguistic content, indicate the proximity of the "Pra-Aryans", Indo-Aryans and Proto-Slavs. However, does the lack of clear evidence for the existence of writing allow us to deny the existence of language?

As Sylwia Jędrzejewska states: "Work on contemporary mtDNA has led to conclusions such as: the common origin of the Slavic population with the central position of the Western Slavs, the genetic similarity of the Slavs to other Europeans, the connections of the Slavs from northeastern Europe with the Balts and the Finno-Ugrics, the continuity of some maternal genetic lines that speak for the presence of the biological ancestors of the historical Slavs in Central Europe already in the Bronze Age and early Iron Age" [33]. It can be assumed that the hypothesis of a settlement void or the late arrival of the Slavs on Polish lands has been falsified.

The results of subsequent new studies also confirm the theses about the ancient origin of the direct ancestors of today's Poles, who historically inhabited Polish lands, which was published in several works in the "Ido Movement for Culture Journal of Martial Arts Anthropology" and in other scientific periodicals [2,14,23,35,36]. At the same time, the allochthonous theory of the origin of the Slavs is probably subject to final falsification. The interdisciplinary team of Marek Figlerowicz published a work that indicates genetic continuation in the 1st millennium in the area of Central and Eastern Europe. In the 5th century AD, it was already a fully established genetic structure [37], and the Slavs were united by one common language.

Also, Kamil Janicki confirms the falsification of the allochthonous/influential theory, but accepts the thesis that language and "Slavicness" appeared relatively late. He wrote: "Slavicness was not an innate or unchanging feature. It was born relatively late, and people living in antiquity cannot be called Slavs or even Proto-Slavic. After all, they did not consider themselves to be Slavs, they did not use their language ..." [38]. How can we be sure that they did not speak a language, let's call it Proto-Slavic? This language is older than Germanic languages and is sometimes identified with Proto-Indo-European, as mentioned earlier.

M. Figlerowicz's team disseminates the results of their research with their interpretation that the direct ancestors of Poles had indeed lived in the territory of today's Poland for thousands of years, but they became Slavs "only around the 6th century AD" [39]. Where does the certainty about their then and earlier self-identification, language, culture come from? Contrary to the findings of other studies [37], the [40] team conclude that: "the

majority of individuals from medieval Poland can be modeled only as a mixture of ancestries related to Roman Iron Age Lithuania, which is similar to ancestries of individuals from middle to late Bronze Age Poland (44%, 95% confidence interval 36–51%), an ancestry component related to Hungarian Scythians or Slovakian La Tène individuals (49%, 95% confidence interval 41–57%) and potentially a minority component of ancestry related to Sarmatians from the Caucasus ($P = 0.13$).

Namely, there is no “Germanic” or “Scandinavian” component in the essential components of the genetic pool of the direct ancestors of today’s Poles. However, it is certain that the lands of present-day Germany, especially its eastern part [Figure 1], were settled by Western Slavs in the early Middle Ages [41,42]. It is estimated that there were 700 strongholds in the territory of present-day Germany, and 2,000 in the territory of present-day Poland.

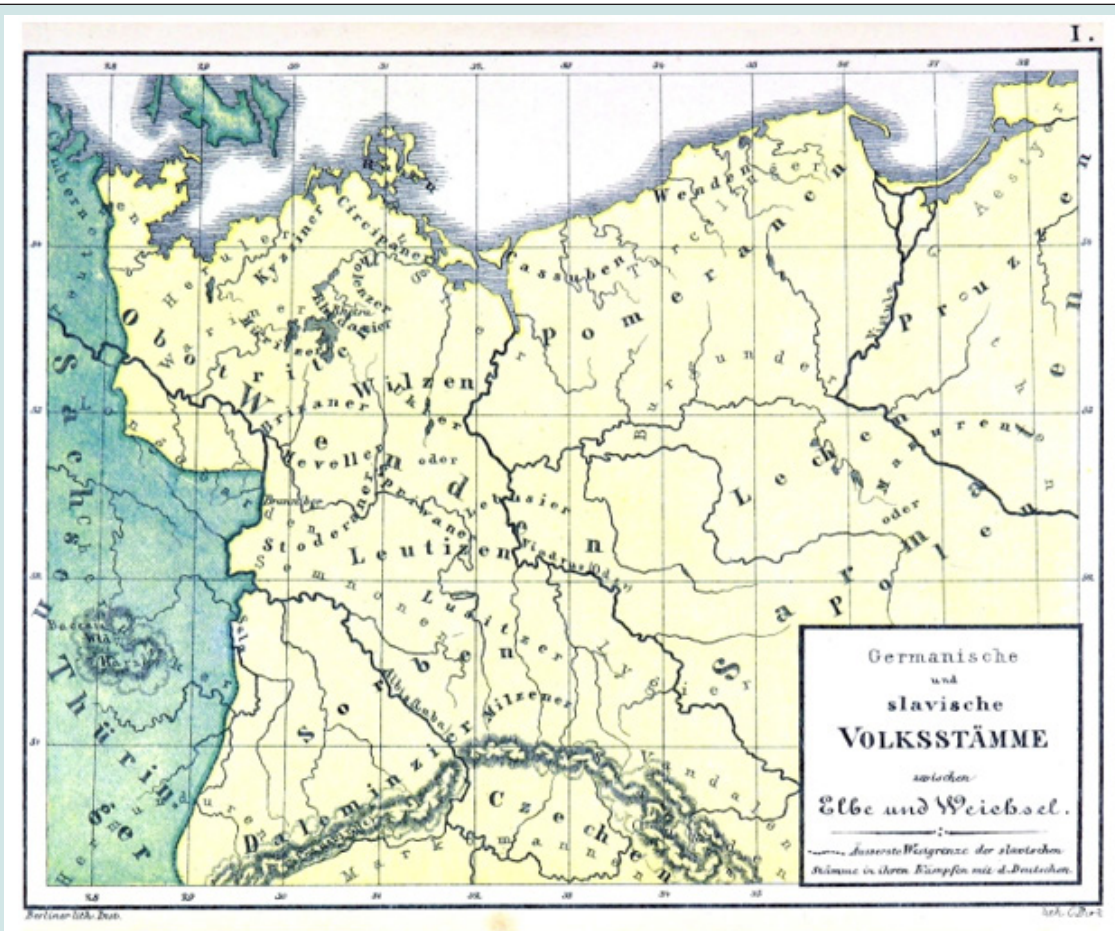


Figure 1: Areas inhabited by Slavs in the early Middle Ages on a German map.

[https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germania_Slavica#/media/Plik:Germanische_und_slavische_Volksstaemme_zwischen_Elbe_und_Weichsel.jpg]

Why should Lech (Lech I) and Krak (Krak I), who were able to unite a large part of the Slavic tribes, be treated only as legendary or fairy-tale characters? And such great leaders as Ariovit (Jarovit), who was a “Suevo”, or Arminius (Jaromir?), the leader of the Cherusci and the conqueror of the Romans? Who inhabited the areas east of Gaul and north of the Alps at that time? Much indicates that the history of our direct ancestors should cover the period preceding the emergence of the Przeworsk and Lusatian archaeological cultures - perhaps starting with the Neolithic Vinča culture.

While in the description of the pre-Christian times of today's

Poland we move in the areas of hypotheses, controversial theories and questions without a clear answer, since the 10th century AD the history of Polish statehood has been quite well documented and described. The author of the book focused on the issues of hoplology, combat techniques and tactics, and knightly ethos and culture. This may be related to the earlier, ancient history of the Lechites and Slavs, but undoubtedly the cultural context of the current history of Europe influenced the local military culture to the greatest extent. Therefore, Polish warfare drew from the experience of centuries of difficult neighborhood. Horseback riding, a reflex bow and the

czekan / nadziak (like ice axe / ice pick) functioned as combat tools from the times of Great Scythia to the 17th century (hussars and other military formations).

Poles repeatedly stood up to fight in defense of Christian Europe and Western civilization, stopping Asian aggressors - Tatars, Turks and Soviets [43,44]. Currently, Russia's aggression, where mentality and political thought have stopped at the level of Mongol expansionism from the 13th century, is being stopped by the Ukrainian nation, also drawing on the heritage of the valiant Cossacks from the time of the First Polish Republic. It is like a clash of Western civilization with Russian civilization and the so-called "Russian peace".

Today's renaissance of the national heritage of martial arts in Poland (Polish sabre, hussar sabre) and the Sarmatian tradition [1,44,45], or also in Ukraine (combat hopak) [46,47], results from the desire to restore these components of cultural achievements partially lost in the historical chaos, which are today an important element in strengthening identity and patriotic awareness. And as such, they are worthy of state and social support.

Summary and Directions for Further Research

The facts and logical evidence cited in [1], as well as international research, seem to definitively disprove the hypothesis of the late arrival of the Slavs, developed in Nazi Germany. However, the dispute does not end there. Defenders of the false, yet unfortunately still dominant, concept of the allochthonous ethnogenesis of the Slavs recently announced [48] that they have resolved the dispute [49]. Were samples from Gothic burials included and examined by chance or on purpose? The Goths did indeed migrate through the Lechitic/Polish lands. But the Slavs lived here permanently [50].

Therefore, research should continue, preferably by inter- or multidisciplinary teams. The majority of genetic studies from recent years still indicate a continuous settlement of Polish lands. This is complemented by evidence from hopology (the ethos and art of war in warrior cultures) and defensive architecture (the art of fortification – the construction of strongholds), as well as evidence from anthropological (skull measurements) and linguistic studies.

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