

SESSION I

Still or shifting? The dynamics of chronology



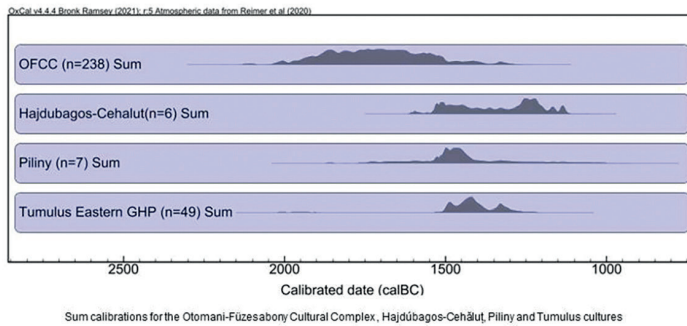
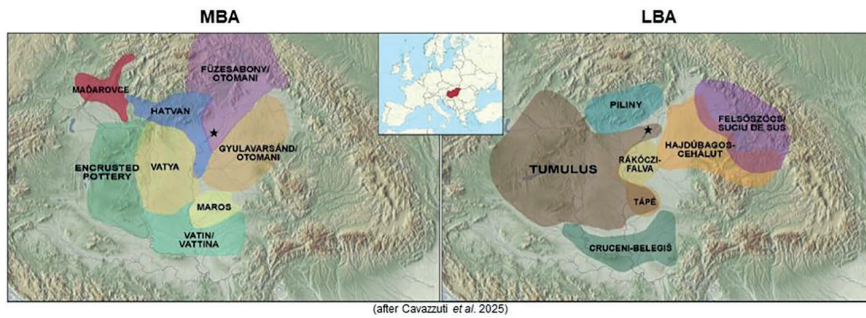
FROM THE MIDDLE BRONZE AGE
TO THE LATE BRONZE AGE
IN THE EASTERN HUNGARIAN PLAIN:
AN OVERVIEW OF ABSOLUTE DATES

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The transition from the Middle to the Late Bronze Age in the Great Hungarian Plain is marked by the end of tell settlements in the region. While this phenomenon was once considered a brief period linked to a specific historical event – the alleged invasion of the Tumulus Culture into the Carpathian Basin – it is now recognised as a prolonged process involving the occupation and abandonment of individual tells at different times. Relatively little is known about the settlement system that characterised the first phase of the Late Bronze Age in the eastern part of the Great Hungarian Plain. Similarly, absolute dates associated with this horizon are few.

In this presentation we will discuss all the available radiocarbon dates from the end of the Middle Bronze Age and the first part of the Late Bronze Age in the eastern part of the Great Hungarian Plain and review the archaeological evidence from these periods. Special attention will be paid to the transition from the Middle to the Late Bronze Age and the settlements and cemeteries that can be ascribed to this important period in the prehistory of the Carpathian Basin.



Above: Cavazzuti et al. 2025, Fig. 1; below: Sum calibration for the Otomani–Füzesabony Cultural Complex, Hajdúbagos–Cehalut, Piliny and Tumulus cultures (model: Alexandra Gävan)

Notes

BETWEEN TRADITION AND TRANSFORMATION
IN THE EASTERN GREAT HUNGARIAN PLAIN:
A NEW CHRONOLOGICAL STUDY
OF THE HAJDÚBAGOS–CEHĂLUŢ CERAMIC STYLE

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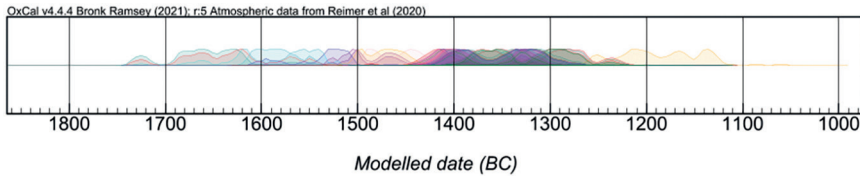
The sites of Tumulus culture (TC) can be found in both the southern and northern parts of the Great Hungarian Plain (GHP), spanning from the Koszider period in the south and the early Late Bronze Age (LBA) in the north. However, in the intermediate zone and further to the east, local Middle Bronze Age (MBA) traditions remained dominant alongside the impact of the TC. Examples include the Hajdúbagos–CehăluŢ ceramic style, which covers a significant area of the Northeastern Carpathian Basin. The Hajdúbagos–CehăluŢ is referred to as a local subgroup of the TC by most scholars, which lasted from approximately the end of the Koszider period (1600–1500/1450 BC) until the Reinecke BD (1200 BC). However, we did not have any absolute dates for the Hajdúbagos–CehăluŢ ceramic style, but this has changed in recent years.

This presentation will provide an overview of the latest chronological results relating to the ceramic style, with a particular focus on its initial and final phases. It will also be demonstrated how these results fit into the radiocarbon model for the eastern part of the Carpathian Basin.

The new data reveal some important conclusions. For example, the early phase of this ceramic style appears to have coexisted with the final stage of the MBA tell cultures in the GHP, in a manner similar to the Maďarovce–TC transition in Southwestern Slovakia. This supports the view, consistent with the latest archaeological concepts, that the tran-

sition between the Middle and Late Bronze Ages was not a brief, diachronic event, but rather a longer, synchronous process.

Project No. KDP-2023-C2321722 has been implemented with the support provided by the Ministry of Culture and Innovation of Hungary from the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund, financed under the 2023-2.1.2-KDP-2023-00002 funding scheme.



Stacked plot showing the radiocarbon dates associated with the Hajdúbagos–Cehăluț ceramic style (model: Anna Szigeti using OxCal v.4.4.4)

Notes

EXPLORING CERAMIC CHRONOLOGY AND CULTURAL LINKS IN THE LATE BRONZE AGE CEMETERY OF PECICA-SITUL 14, WESTERN ROMANIA

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The presentation focuses on a Late Bronze Age cemetery discovered in 2011 at Pecica-Situl 14, located in Arad County, western Romania. Although smaller than the famous Tápé cemetery near Szeged, it represents a significant piece in understanding the Bronze Age in this region. The cemetery was investigated during the pre-development excavations for the Arad–Makó highway construction. In the excavated area were documented 38 graves. Radiocarbon dating indicates the cemetery was in use from the 16th to the 10th century BC, with inhumation graves predominantly from the 16th to 14th centuries BC, and cremation graves from the 13th century BC onward.

The graves were furnished with a variety of items; ceramic vessels being the most numerous. The ceramics were analyzed stylistically and chronologically, revealing three phases of ceramic evolution corresponding to the periods of use. The first phase retains Middle Bronze Age traditions, the second introduces forms from Central European tumulus graves, and the third marks a shift with cremation practices and new urn types. Radiocarbon dating helped calibrate these phases.

In line with the topic, the spatial distribution of ceramic forms and decorations similar to those discovered in the Pecica cemetery is considered. To obtain relevant results, the spatial distribution analysis incorporates published data from 432 contemporary sites. The interpretation of the data indicates that during the 16th and 14th centuries BC, the most numerous analogies for the shapes and decorations of ceramics are found in the area between the Tisza River and the Apușeni Mountains. At the same time, some interesting connections were observed with more distant regions such as Slovakia and Bohemia. Starting with the 13th century BC, as the funerary ritual changed, we also notice a concentration of the main ceramic analogies toward Transylvania and other eastern areas.



*Excavating a Late Bronze Age grave from the Pecica–Site 14 cemetery
(photo: Victor Sava)*

Notes

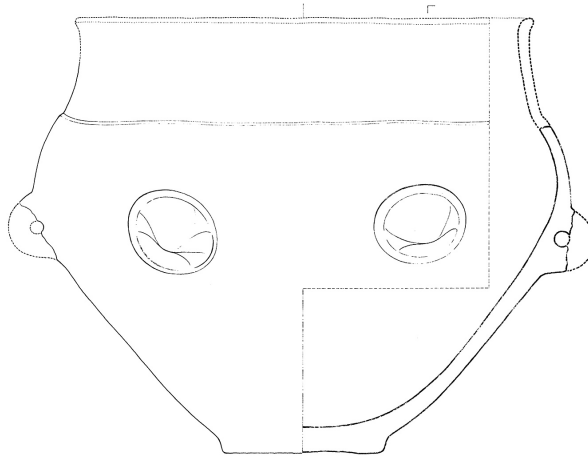
WHEN DID THE SOUTHERN URNFIELDS BEGIN?
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MIDDLE
AND LATE BRONZE AGE
IN THE SOUTHERN CARPATHIAN BASIN

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The southern Carpathian Basin (present-day continental Croatia) is poorly researched for the Middle Bronze Age period. A few settlements (Poljana Križevačka, Kurilovec) and cemeteries (Poljana Križevačka, Sirova Katalena, Moravče) have been excavated, but the majority of known stray finds from the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Bijelo Brdo, Orolik, Erdut) come from eastern Croatia. In northwestern Croatia, the cremation cemetery of Poljana Križevačka, with 50 graves dated to Br C and Br D phases, has been excavated. Typo-chronological analysis places this cemetery within the Virovitica group of the Urnfield culture. Absolute dates from a total of nine graves (eleven dates) indicate a range between the 15th and 13th centuries BC, which fits well into the regional framework of absolute dating for this type of grave (e.g., Teržan, Črešnar 2014). Finds of single inhumation graves with preserved costume demonstrate direct influences of the Tumulus culture in continental Croatia. What are the chronological and spatial relationships between the more numerous cremation cemeteries and individual inhumation graves from this period? When can “the first Urnfields” (Cavazzuti et al. 2022) be dated in the area between the Middle Danube and Italy? Local ceramic production forms the basis of regional chronologies, which are linked by widely distributed metal finds that can be integrated into Central European chronological systems, as demonstrated through numerous studies (e.g., Hänsel 1968). This overview aims to present the current state of research and discuss the funerary customs and typo-chronological relationships in light of absolute dating for the period between the 15th and 13th centuries BC within the regional framework of the southern Carpathian Basin.



*Poljana Krizevacka, Urn from grave 47
(drawing for the Institute of Archaeology Martina Rončević)*

Notes

FROM LITZEN TO THE EARLY URNFIELD CULTURE:
NEW INSIGHTS INTO CHRONOLOGY
AND POPULATION DYNAMICS IN THE WESTERNMOST
PANNONIAN PLAIN AND THE SOUTHEASTERN ALPS

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ZRC SAZU, Institute of Archaeology, Slovenia

Large-scale highway construction projects in Slovenia have brought to light an exceptional number of settlements dating to the mid-2nd millennium BC. Through systematic analyses of material culture, extensive radiocarbon dating, and the publication of these sites over the past twenty years, a solid corpus of data has been established for the chronology, burial practices, settlement patterns, and population dynamics of this period. These data are of key relevance not only for Slovenia but also for neighbouring and culturally related regions such as northeastern Croatia, Austrian Styria, and western Transdanubia.

The study area corresponds geographically to the westernmost part of the Pannonian Plain and the southeastern Alpine region of present-day Slovenia. Within this territory, three major shifts in material culture and mortuary practices can be observed during the mid-2nd millennium BC: the Litzen horizon, the Tumulus Culture, and the Oloris–Podsmreka horizon. This study had two goals. The first was to establish a more robust internal chronology for all three phenomena by applying Bayesian modelling to the existing radiocarbon dates. The second goal was to analyse palaeodemographic trends by combining counts of archaeological site phases with radiocarbon-date-based analyses. Two models were employed: a Kernel Density Estimation model using Summed Probability Distributions (KDE-SPD) to mitigate calibration-curve effects, and a KDE model based on occupation-phase counts.

The results demonstrate for the first time that all three shifts in material culture correspond to significant changes in population dynamics. These results contribute to a more refined chronological framework for the middle of the 2nd millennium BC and offer new perspectives on the temporal and demographic character of the Tumulus culture period in the westernmost Carpathian Basin and the southeastern Alpine region.



*The settlement of Velike njive (Slovenia), dating to the Middle and Late Bronze Age
(Mason, Kramberger 2024)*

Notes

NEW ¹⁴C-AMS DATA ON THE TUMULUS CULTURE IN DANUBIAN LOWLAND, SLOVAKIA

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The contribution aims to present the results of an analysis of about twenty radiocarbon AMS dates from inhumation and cremation graves dated to the Final Early to the Advanced Middle Bronze Age (1700–1350 BC) discovered in south-western Slovakia. This dataset, collected in recent years, significantly contributes to the study of the absolute chronology of the Tumulus period in the Danubian Lowland, representing the very first radiocarbon dating of archaeological features excavated in Slovakia, which are associated with the Middle Danube and Carpathian Tumulus cultures. Samples consisting mostly of human bones, teeth, and some wood charcoal from a total of ten graves documented at the sites of Černík, Častkovce, Svätý Peter, Nové Zámky, Salka, and Šamorín-Šámot were analysed, some of them even multiple times to obtain more accurate and reliable results. All selected burial features were intact and mostly furnished with typo-chronologically distinctive metal and ceramic artefacts, whose relative dating was thoroughly compared with the results of the ¹⁴C measurements. The entire modelled chronological sequence represents a complex period of major socio-cultural transformations – including gradual changes in burial rites and material expression – that occurred during the 16th and 15th centuries BC north of the Danube within the north-western Carpathian Basin. The interpretation of the absolute dates provides a basic framework for the Middle Bronze Age chronology in the lowland area extending between the Little Carpathians in the north-west and the Lower Ipel' (Ipoly) valley in the south-east. Future work will need to further refine and verify this framework with new data, which will also open possibilities for research into other, more complex aspects of the Tumulus culture phenomenon in the region, as this remarkable topic has not been a priority for Slovak archaeology for many decades.



Burials of prominent women from the 16th century BC (Častkovce) and the 15th century BC (Šamorín-Šámot) in the Danubian Lowland of southwestern Slovakia (photo: Michal Ontko, Romana Ferencová; modified by Jakub Godiš)

Notes

FROM RELATIVE TO ABSOLUTE:
RADIOCARBON DATING AND THE CHRONOLOGY
OF TUMULUS CULTURE IN MORAVIA

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The Middle Bronze Age in Moravia is generally considered to be the Tumulus Culture period. The chronology of the Middle Danubian Tumulus Culture (*Středodunajská mohylová kultura*) was last summarised by Professor Stanislav Stuchlík in his evaluation of the Borotice burial mound (2006). During the study of the transition between the skeleton and cremation burial rites, it was decided to date some of the graves using radiocarbon dating and by combining of relative and typological dating to enable study this phenomenon. The biggest problem turned out to be the reliability of the archaeological record in Moravia. Although more than 20 radiocarbon-dated burials in Moravia can be linked to the Middle Bronze Age, only some of them are characteristic in terms of their inventory.

Burial evidence determined by typological criteria and radiocarbon dating was used to synchronise Moravian data with established models for southern Germany and Switzerland, revealing close parallels in the timing of Reinecke's periods. We constructed a chronological axis based on pin typology independently to refine the understanding of cultural transitions.

The results indicate that the onset of the Middle Bronze Age was a prolonged process, marked by the coexistence of late Early Bronze Age and early Tumulus Culture artefacts. This study demonstrates that Moravian development was not exceptional, but part of wider regional dynamics.

This paper shows how the recent research has refined the chronological framework of this cultural period through absolute dating and help us to understand social and cultural transformations during the Tumulus period in Moravia.

This paper is a result of the OP JAK project *Prepared for the Future: Understanding the Long-Term Resilience of Human Culture (RES-HUM)*, registration number: CZ.02.01.01/00/22_008/0004593.



Borotice, burial mound, Moravia region (photo: Klára Šabatová)

Notes

TUMULUS CULTURE IN THE CENTRAL BALKANS IN LIGHT OF NEW RESEARCH AND ABSOLUTE DATES

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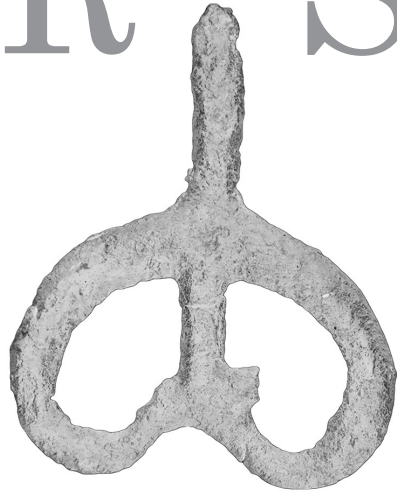
Although the Tumulus Culture is far less prominent in the Central Balkans than in the Carpathian Basin, its influence in this region is clearly recognizable in burial practices and the associated material culture. According to the chronological framework commonly used in Serbian archaeology the transition zone between the Pannonian Plain and the Dinaric Mountain area was, from the mid-2nd millennium BC, inhabited by communities of the Belegiš, Paraćin, and Brnjica groups, all attributed to the Late Bronze Age.

To date, no unequivocal settlements connected with the Tumulus Culture have been identified in the Central Balkans. Nevertheless, we propose that its impact is visible in the material culture of the prehistoric communities occupying the basins of the Western, Southern, and Great Morava rivers. This influence is most clearly expressed in the stylistic traits of pottery decoration found both in some aspects of burial practices within the Paraćin-type flat cemeteries. An analysis of burial customs further indicates that the Tumulus Culture played a significant role in shaping funerary practices, especially within the Brnjica group and, to some extent, in the Timok group of eastern Serbia during the transition from the Middle to the Late Bronze Age. These changes are reflected primarily in the increased presence of bronze objects in graves, a notable difference from practices of the Middle Bronze Age.

In the past decade, the first absolute dates for Tumulus-related contexts in the Central Balkans have been obtained. These results provide important confirmation of the cultural influence exerted on Late Bronze Age communities in the region. Based on current research, we suggest that southern Serbia and northern Montenegro represent the southernmost boundary of Tumulus Culture influence in the Central Balkans.

P O S

T E R S



THE KING OF RAPIERS:
NEW RESULTS ON THE EPONYMOUS WEAPON
FOUND IN KESZTHELY-LEGELŐ-DŰLŐ

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Rapiers are among the most thoroughly discussed weapon types of the Late Bronze Age, having been examined from a typo-chronological perspective from the 19th century to the present day. Except for the archaeometry results from the Olmo di Nogara cemetery in Italy, one major aspect remains largely unexplored: the *chaîne opératoire* of these artefacts. This approach would allow us to address key questions about what materials these objects were made from, how they were cast, what post-casting steps were involved in shaping and decorating them, how they were used, and whether they underwent any special manipulation before being deposited in the few Carpathian burials or in the River Danube.

The multi-expert team dedicates the poster to one of the most emblematic Keszthely rapiers, discovered in the 19th century in the Legelő-dűlő area. The poster synthesizes both previous (Tarbay et al. 2024 CAH; Tarbay et al. 2025 JAS:REP 64) and newly obtained results (Tarbay–Lukács in progress) from the project *The Technology, Use and Manipulation of Weapons from Late Bronze Age Transdanubia*. Within this framework, the Keszthely rapier was subjected to non-destructive elemental analysis (PGAA, Prompt Gamma Activation Analysis, Budapest Neutron Centre) and invasive elemental analysis (LA-ICP-MS,

*The rapier
from Keszthely-Legelő-dűlő
(Tarbay 2023)*

Laser Ablation Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry, HUN-REN ATOMKI) to determine its raw material composition. X-ray radiography was employed to investigate the hidden internal structure and casting defects of the artefact. In addition, a use-wear analysis was carried out to characterise both the technological traces of production and the wear patterns resulting from use on this specific rapier as well as on all other rapiers available for study in Hungarian museum collections between 2020 and 2024.



Notes

FINAL OCCUPATION AT TÓSZEG-LAPOSHALOM
AND THE EARLY TUMULUS CULTURE:
SETTLEMENT NETWORKS AND MATERIAL CULTURE
IN THE TÓSZEG MICROREGION
AT THE CLOSE OF THE MIDDLE BRONZE AGE

Csaba Bodnár

Independent researcher, Hungary

Tószeg-Laposhalom is a key site of Hungarian Bronze Age research, known since the late 19th century and subject to numerous excavations over the past 150 years. The site was inhabited from the late Early to the late Middle Bronze Age (ca. 23rd–17th centuries BC), with its final occupation layers and abandonment dated to the Koszider period on the basis of recent radiocarbon dates and material culture evidence. While no cemetery associated with this late phase of the tell has yet been identified in its immediate surroundings, a significant Bronze Age cemetery is known on the opposite bank of the Tisza, approximately 6 km away at Rákóczifalva-Kastélydomb, where more than 100 graves dating to the Early and late Middle Bronze Age have been uncovered, attesting to the site's long-term function as a sacred place. Based on burial rites and grave goods, scholarship attributes most of the burials to the Rákóczifalva group of the Tumulus culture, while also emphasizing that the pottery tradition of the community using this cemetery displays features comparable to late Vátya and Füzesabony pottery styles, which are characteristic of the upper layers at Laposhalom.

On the poster, I present the available evidence concerning the final phase and abandonment of the tell at Tószeg-Laposhalom, followed by an overview of current knowledge regarding the Middle Bronze Age settlement network in the Tószeg microregion, in comparison with the early Late Bronze Age situation known to date, based on both earlier findings and ongoing systematic field surveys. I then highlight some aspects indicative of interaction in material culture and exchange of beliefs between the tell's late inhabitants and the users of the nearby cemetery at Rákóczifalva.



Tószeg-Laposhalom and Rákóczifalva-Kastélydomb (illustration: Csaba Bodnár)

Notes

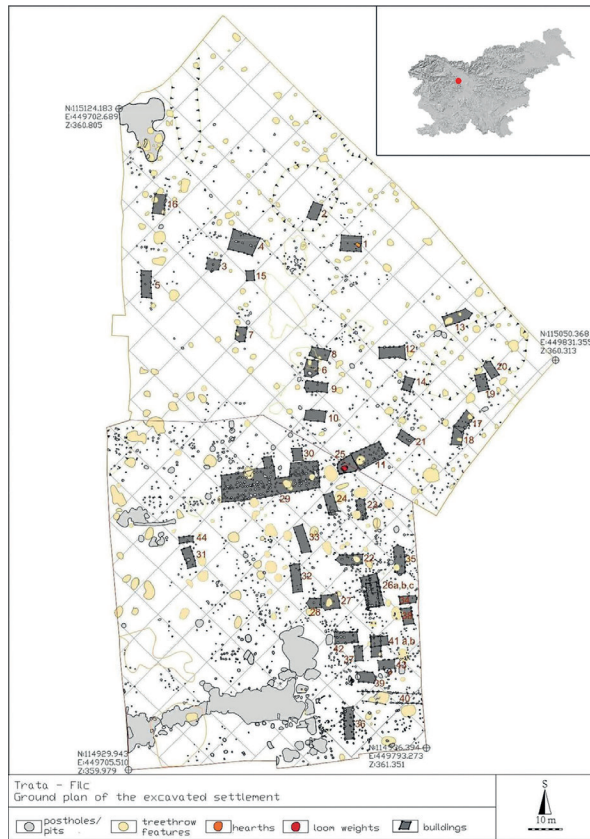
FIRST INSIGHTS INTO LIFE ON THE FRINGES OF THE
TUMULUS CULTURE: THE BRONZE AGE SETTLEMENT
AT TRATA NEAR ŠKOFJA LOKA, SLOVENIA

Anja Ipavec

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In 2018 and 2020, part of a Middle and Late Bronze Age settlement located on a fluvial terrace of the Sora River near Trata, Škofja Loka, in central Slovenia was excavated. So far, the results have only been published in preliminary reports and articles (Brezigar, Klokočovnik 2018; Brezigar 2021; Škvor Jernejčič et al. 2022; Leghissa et al. 2023), while the site is examined in detail in my doctoral dissertation. Based on the ceramic repertoire and available radiocarbon date, the settlement was occupied during the Oloris–Podsmreka horizon (Bz B2/C1–Bz D/Ha A), which partially overlaps with the Tumulus Culture. The site has yielded an exceptionally large ceramic assemblage, providing an important new dataset for understanding the Middle and the beginning of the Late Bronze Age, a period that until recently remained poorly documented in the south-eastern Alpine region.

Numerous postholes reveal the ground plans of at least 40 rectangular buildings and other wooden structures, with the densest concentration in the central and eastern parts of the excavated area. The most striking feature is a building approximately 30×10 m in length, which has no parallels in contemporary Slovenian settlements and can be compared to the 20 m long timber-framed house discovered at Gelsesziget in Hungary (Horváth 1994, 219). Some ceramic shapes and decorations from Trata show clear similarities with Tumulus Culture sites, including incised hatched triangles, oriented upside down and knobs encircled with a groove. In this poster, I focus on a particular settlement feature which can be interpreted as a place where a vertical weaving loom stood, which provides a small insight into life in the Trata settlement, located at the very edge of the Tumulus Culture in terms of both geography and cultural influences.



Geographical position of the site Trata near Škofja Loka and an interpreted ground plan of the excavated site of Trata near Škofja Loka (modified after Brezigar 2021, priloga 3; načrt 2)

Notes

THE MIDDLE AND LATE BRONZE AGE
AT THE SZÉKELYUDVARHELY
(ODORHEIU SECUIESC, ROMANIA)
KADICSFALVI-RÉT/ALSÓLOK SITE

Zoltán-József Botha

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The town of Székelyudvarhely (Odorheiu Secuiesc) is situated in the eastern-southeastern fringe of the Transylvanian Basin, on the eastern edge of the Küküllő (Târnava) Hills, along the upper course of the Nagy-Küküllő (Târnava Mare) River within the Udvarhely (Odorhei) Basin, in the southwestern part of Harghita County. The site is located on the northeastern outskirts of the town, in the agricultural area, on the edge of the river's floodplain. During the preventive archaeological excavations preceding the construction of the planned industrial zone, features of a 3rd–4th century Goth village were identified, alongside structures belonging to the Middle Bronze Age Wietenberg culture. The latter were located near the riverbank, dug into the gravelly subsoil in the southern/southeastern part of the site. At the same time, burials of the Noua culture and associated features – appearing as stony surfaces and cultural layers – were uncovered on the northwestern edge, excavated into the brown humus and the yellowish-clayey subsoil.

A significant amount of archaeological material has been recovered from the features. Through the analysis of these finds, along with the observations and interpretation of settlement features made during the excavations, we can gain a more accurate picture of the characteristics, lifestyle, and customs of the Middle Bronze Age Wietenberg culture and the Late Bronze Age Noua culture populations that inhabited the region. The material remains of the Wietenberg culture allow us to understand the specific traits of this population, while the complex of features concentrated around the burials of the Noua culture provides insight into the characteristics of this period. Thus, a more comprehensive picture emerges regarding the transition between the Middle and Late Bronze Age, as well as the defining traits of the cultures in question.



*Burial of the Noua culture from the Székelyudvarhely/Odorheiu Secuiesc-Kadicsfalvi-rét/
Alsólók archaeological site (photo: Zsolt Nyárádi, from the archives
of the Haáz Rezső Museum, Székelyudvarhely/Odorheiu Secuiesc)*

Notes

TUMULUS CULTURE FEMALE BURIAL WITH BRONZE SHEET BELT FROM HAJÓS

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²*Institute of Archaeology,*

ELTE Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungary

In recent years, several richly furnished female burials dated to the early phase of the Tumulus period have been uncovered. The typological composition, quantity, quality, and raw materials of the associated grave goods point to the existence of a socially prominent stratum of women whose members likely played a significant role in the communities of the mid–second millennium BC. The exceptionally rich female burial recently discovered at the Hajós-Méhes-dűlői-csatorna site can be situated within this broader phenomenon. The site is located in the southern part of the Danube–Tisza Interfluve, approximately 20 km from the cemetery at Sükösd, which likewise yielded a female burial of outstanding wealth and status.

Although the grave – excavated in 2024 by the staff of the Katona József Museum in Kecskemét – had been subject to minor disturbance and the skeletal remains were poorly preserved, the principal elements of the deceased woman’s funerary costume can be reconstructed with confidence. In addition to a necklace distinguished by the diversity of its raw materials and its complex structure, various ankle and arm ornaments, and a dress pin, the most remarkable component of the assemblage is the bronze sheet belt preserved in situ. Beyond its rarity and state of completeness, the significance of this object lies in the well-documented circumstances of its recovery. In contrast to most belts of the Szeged–Sieding type, these contextual data permit a precise reconstruction of its mode of wear. Planned archaeometric and other scientific analyses will further contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the manufacture, technology, and use of this more than one-metre-long, uniquely crafted and richly decorated artefact.



The female burial with a bronze belt from Hajós (photo: Eszter Bódai)

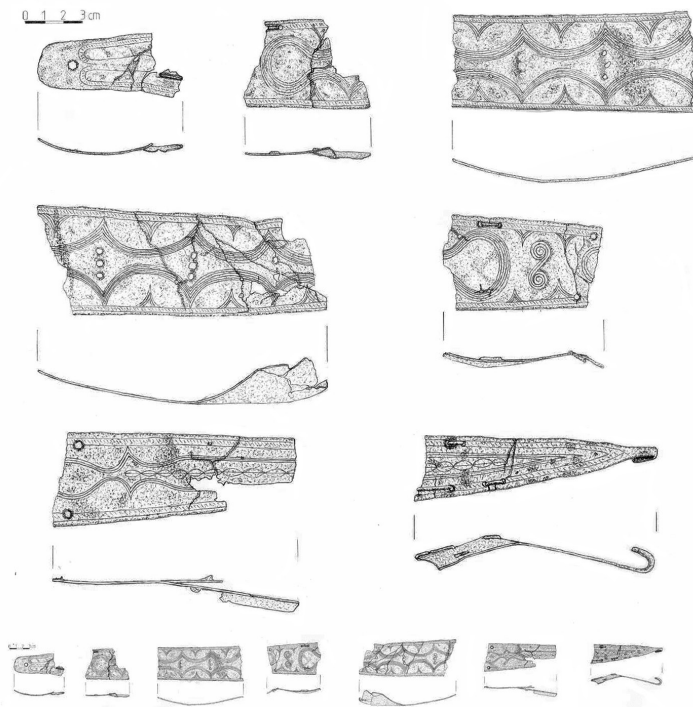
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A UNIQUE FIND OF THE TUMULUS CULTURE FROM BÁTYA

Andrea Lantos

Viski Károly Museum Kalocsa, Hungary

The staff of the Viski Károly Museum unearthed artefacts belonging to the Tumulus culture in the Bática-Oroszpuszta site during a 2022 fieldwork project using metal detectors. During the investigation, we unearthed several matching pieces of a bronze plate belt, bronze bracelets, bronze pins and fragments of spiral rings. Bática is in the southern part of Bács-Kiskun County, 5 km from Kalocsa, on the left bank of the Danube, in the Kalocsai Sárköz. The site is located in the southern part of the settlement, directly south of Lake Remenyicei, on the southern side of a NW–SE-oriented hill ridge that barely stands out from its surroundings. In 2023, a further field visit and instrumental investigation was conducted in the area, thereby enabling the extent of the Tumulus culture site to be clarified. In the summer of 2023, a rescue excavation was conducted at the site, during which four graves, three prehistoric pits and an Árpád-era well were unearthed. The excavation revealed the presence of skeletal remains from the Tumulus culture. The dimensions of the cemetery are estimated to be approximately 150×50 m, with a maximum of 20–25 graves located within its boundaries. This estimation is based on the distribution of the archaeological finds. In the course of the excavation, seven fragments of the bronze plate belt were unearthed in Bática. These fragments were recovered from the plowed layer. It is hypothesised that the object was removed from its original context by the action of the plough. It is evident that parallels can be identified in Tetétlen, in Szeged-Nagyszéksós, in graves 73 and 132 of the Tápé cemetery, and in grave 94 of the Velebit cemetery.



Drawing of a bronze belt found at the site (drawing: Bálint Szalontay)

Notes

LORDS OF THE (GRAVE) RINGS

Nikolett Kovács, Attila Németh

Herman Ottó Museum, Hungary

Since 2007 the staff of the Herman Ottó Museum have been conducting excavations in the Bükkábrány lignite mine. A location is very specific, because entire sites can be studied in large area. From 2022 we have been working in the northernmost part of site VIII, where we have found features from multiple periods. The most significant is a cemetery, including more than 200 graves, dated to the Middle–Late Bronze Age. In its structure rows, parcels and family groups can be distinguished. The rite was very strict, females were oriented eastward, males westward. The burial customs of the Füzesabony and the Tumulus cultures mingled very specifically, cremations appeared, several occurred in normal sized and depth graves, moreover in one case the calcinated bones were organized in anatomical order. Some of the central burials were surrounded with ring-shaped ditches and probably had mounds on them, also inhumation and cremation practice also used in these graves. Unfortunately the cemetery was 90% looted, with grave robberies occurring shortly after the funeral, as implied by well targeted robbing pits. Even more extraordinary is the 200 m diameters circular trench, which can be dated between the Middle and Late Bronze Age and completely encircles the burials. So far three gates have been excavated, a southern, a western and a north-western one, which is pointing to the tell settlement of the Füzesabony culture, which lies approximately 500 m from the site. The structure of the cemetery fits perfectly in the circular trench and on the roads, that are reconstructed from the gates. Together with the existing ¹⁴C dates this indicates a necropolis that was in use for at least 200 years.



Graves with circular ditches (photo: Szabolcs Honti)

Notes

MAPPING THE TUMULI: NEW PERSPECTIVES
ON LATE MIDDLE BRONZE AGE BARROWS
IN THE LAKE FERTŐ REGION (WESTERN HUNGARY)

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The landscape around Lake Fertő (Neusiedl), one of the largest standing bodies of water in Central Europe, shared today by Austria and Hungary, is characterised by a high density of prehistoric tumuli. Recently, with the support of the ELTE Research Centre for the Humanities, an airborne laser scanning (ALS) survey was conducted over approximately 60 km² in the Hungarian territory west of the lake. Within this study area, our research focuses on Bronze Age features, integrating published and archival sources with non-destructive field methods (UAV-based ALS, systematic fieldwalking, metal-detector survey, magnetometry, and photogrammetry).

Although a significant proportion of the dated barrows around the lake can be assigned to the Early Iron Age, Middle Bronze Age tumuli have been known since the 19th century within the administrative territory of Sopron, near the Austrian border (Sopron-Városi-puszta site). One of these mounds yielded a pseudo-corded (Litzen-decorated) jug, a vessel type also characteristic of the Tumulus Culture period. Recent analysis of ALS data, combined with a field survey, has identified more than thirty barrows at the site, enabling a more precise delineation of the tumulus field and detailed mapping of the individual mounds. Metal-detector surveys conducted in the surrounding area have produced pendants and pins that further support a Middle Bronze Age date. The

results of this investigation are interpreted within the broader framework of prehistoric barrow-building practices in the Lake Fertő region.

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*Bronze pendant (Ráksi-type) from the metal-detector survey at Sopron-Városi-puszta
(photo: Attila Mrenka)*

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