DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

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Northern Hungary in the Late Copper Age
The finds of the Baden Culture in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county
Theses of the doctoral dissertation

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Budapest, 2014
The objectives of the dissertation

Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county is proved to be a significant territory of the Late Copper Age already in the early period of the research. In this area several important sites were discovered (eg. Ózd-Center – KALICZ 1963; Mezőcsát-Hőrcsögös – KALICZ 1999; Ózd-Kóalajtató – BANNER 1956). However, after the publication of these sites – roughly from the 1980s onwards – the information on the county remained mostly unknown to the science. Apart from a few exceptions important finds was not published from this area (Szentimon-Kenderföldek – KOÓS 1994). But this not means that in this territory Late Copper Age sites were not came to light. On the contrary, the number of uncovered finds increased, though the most of these remained unpublished with the exception of a few sites which were known from degree thesis (Csincse – RAJNA 2002; Mezőkövesd-Nagy-Fertő – GYÖRGY 2008). This situation has led to that Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county is considered as a blank spot on the map of the Late Copper Age.

Therefore, at least the partial supplementation of these gaps was determined as the primary objective of the doctoral dissertation. On behalf of these I made an effort to collect the informations concern to the Late Copper Age from the collections and documentation department of the Herman Ottó Museum of Miskolc and the Hungarian National Museum. This effort resulted the identification of 126 sites were presented in the catalogue. Among these there are finds published earlier and naturally remain such finds which have to study in the future. In spite of this, we have a more detailed picture of the Late Copper Age of Borsod county.

The next important task of the dissertation was the systematization of finds and to fit in them to the research of the Late Copper Age. This means the typological study of the find material on the one hand, and the statistical analysis on the other hand.

The above mentioned two main aims form the basis of the actual task, which is the examining the applicability of the typological systems and the previously outlined cultural groups.

The first task is justified by the phenomenon of the mixed Baden phases (above all in the cases of the Baden IIB-III-IV phases). This phenomenon is mentioned in several previous studies (GYÖRGY 2008, 39-40; MAYER 1990, 108; BONDÁR 1991, 35; ENDRŐDI 1997, 131). The applied typological systems (first of all the classification worked out by Viera Němejcová-Pavúková) became questionable in the sense of the applicability to demonstrate differences between space and time.

In this context emerged the claim to the accurate definition of the earlier outlined groups in the territory of Borsod county (Viss and Ózd-Piliny groups of the Baden Culture). So much the more because different viewpoints and opinions came to light in the literature concern to this topic.

Since the beginning of my work in the study area new approaches appeared in the research of the Late Copper Age. These approaches modified the main tasks on the one hand and made...
them timely on the other. The theory which argues the validity of the conventional archaeological concept of culture has been applied also in the aspect of the Baden Culture (FURHOLT 2008a; FURHOLT 2008b; FURHOLT 2009; FURHOLT 2011). In this light, the supposed coherence of the Baden Culture has been questioned. This means that we have to pay more attention to the regional units. Thus the study of the finds from Borsod county has been set among the important, timely tasks.

Beyond the above mentioned main tasks I would like to create a roughly outlined picture of the settlement types, economical ways and burial customs of the Late Copper Age. The questions of the chronology get a whole chapter too, although the results cannot applied to the final conclusions because the insufficiency of the absolute chronology.

The main tasks of the research presented in this dissertation could be summerized in the following.

1. The collection of the Late Copper Age sites and finds from the territory of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county.
2. The classification of finds and the comparison with the phenomenons appeared in the research of the Late Copper Age.
3. The typological investigation and statistical analysis of the finds to the outlining such units which can give a basis for the further research.
4. Comparison the results with the typological systems applied in the research.
5. Applying the results in the examinations of the polithetic culture model.
6. Verify or disprove the existence of the cultural units identificated earlier.
7. The identification of the chronological position, geographical boundaries and relationship of these groups.
8. Studying the settlements, burials and chronology within the frame of the find material.
9. Represent the roughly outlined picture of the Late Copper Age in Borsod county and in the immediate vicinity of its territory.

**Results**

Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county is situated in the Northeastern part of Hungary. Its main characteristic is the geographical diversity which causes differences in the settlements, economy and way of life concerning the Late Copper Age sites. From the floods of the great rivers through the huge lowlands and miscellaneous hilly regions to the mountains all of the reliefs can be find.

In this huge, but articulated region the data of 126 Late Copper Age sites were collected. The finds can be found mostly in the collections of the Herman Ottó Museum of Miskolc and the
Hungarian National Museum. The informations about the sites in most of the cases are sporadic and incomplete. Just one third of the sites has been identified accurate. Finds known from 105 sites, but the most of these provide only stray finds. The sites with great amount of finds are: Tiszaladány-Nagyhomokos, Mezőkövesd-Nagy-Fertő, Mezőcsát-Márkus-dűlő (MOL-15. lh.), Tiszalúc-Sarkad, Ózd-Kőaljatető and Csincse, Gomba Barna földje (M3-14. lh.).

The overwhelming majority of the sites can be counted among the settlements, although these are mostly stray finds (72%). Cemeteries known from three sites only (Mezőcsát-Hőrcsögös, Ózd-Center, Szentsimon-Kenderföld). The finds of Borsod county came to the museum by field survey, collection or donation. Real excavations took place only in the 30% of the sites. Among these we know only 18 sites where Late Copper Age features came to light (237 archaeological features). In the distribution of the sites groupings can be observed, for example in the vicinity of Ózd, South-Borsod or in the Taktaköz, but sporadically on the territory of the Cserehát. Beside these there are „empty” areas too, like the northern part of the county. These groups represent the regions with good geographical and soil conditions on the one hand, the areas of the archaeological interest on the other.

The find material from the above mentioned 105 sites consist 9408 pieces. The most of these are ceramic objects (93%). Altogether 37 main vessel types, 70 sub-types and 267 variations can be distinguished by the typological analysis. Apart from a few exceptions these vessel forms correspond to the other Late Copper Age vessel types from the Carpathian Basin. On the basis of the analogous finds the types can be connected to the phases worked out by Němejcová-Pavúková. During the analysis I examined the handle types and the characteristic decorated handles separated. The later can be classified to three categories (tapering knobs, flat buttons and the combination of these) whose distribution shows certain regularity. The decoration of the pottery is very diverse. There are more than 4000 decorated sherds in the data base. The number of the ornaments is 181 (the combination of these motifs even more). The most frequent decorative techniques are the impressed (incision, impression) and appliqué (knob, rib) decorations. The painting and incrustation are rarer. From the tempering, the firing, the surface treatment and the wall thickness five ceramic technological groups can be distinguished (A-E) which represent the fine and coarse ware too. From the finds of three sites 31 samples were taken for petrographic analysis. The results show the use of local raw materials and the similarity of production techniques. Among the certain pottery types significant differences could not be observed.

The studies of the stone tools show the use of local raw materials too. Among the chipped stone tools long-distance raw materials are rare. The used rocks are derived mostly from the Zemplén or Bükk Mountains. Among the mentioned finds there are only 17 worked tools. These are blades, retouched flakes or scrapers. The primary studies of the polished stone tools and the grindstones show the same results, namely the use of the local raw materials.
The zoological material could be investigated in detail only in the cases of two sites (Mezőkövesd-Nagy-Fertő; Mezőcsát-Márkus-dűlő, MOL-15. lh.). The predominance of the domesticated species and the same sequence of livestock (cattle, sheep/goat, pig, dog) could be observed in both sites. These data correspond the results from other Late Copper Age sites in the Carpathian Basin.

The statistical examination took place after the presentation and typological analysis of the find material. Correspondence analysis were made on the occurrence of vessel types, decorations, articulated handles and technological groups in the sites. The results show three different pottery styles.

1. The Boleráz style represent the early stage of the Late Copper Age (3640-3370 BC) (STADLER et al. 2001, 544). It spread independently, not mixed with other find materials. Its open-air settlements are situated on the lowlands, mostly close to the rivers. These sites generally unexcavated. There are no informations about the internal structure of the settlements. Its finds can be found in some cave sites of the Bükk Mountains. The remains of the cultic life appear sporadically. Burials, figurines, waggon models and other cultic objects are absent (there is only one exception: the fragment of a gynecomorphic vessel from Tiszalúc-Sarkad - PATAY 1987, Fig. 31/6). Its pottery can be distinguished well from the other ceramic styles of the county with the help of the jugs, jars, bowls decorated inside and pots with incised fishbone pattern. There are some common vessel forms with the Baden style, but this not means chronological parallelism. Between the two styles transition phase could not been observed. Actually the Boleráz style correspond to the Boleráz phase placed to the early period of the Baden Culture (Baden IB-IIA). Inner chronology could not been observed in the find material.

2. The Baden pottery style in Borsod county represent the second period of the Late Copper Age (3360-2930 BC) (STADLER et al. 2001, 544) and correspond to the Viss group of the Baden Culture. Its finds came to light from open-air and cave sites too. It is distributed on the greatest part of the county, but avoids the higher areas. Bigger settlement groups can be observed in South-Borsod and the southern foregounds of the Zemplén Mountains. At Mezőcsát-Hőrcsögös the remains of a biritual cemetery (16 inhumation and cremated burials) have been discovered. The find metarial of the style characterized by the small handled jugs, the semispherical cups, bibartite bowls and pots with incised grid motif. Waggon models (rectangular vessels), pedestalled goblets, Fishbarked shaped vessels and suaceboats appear rarely. The Baden style was younger than the Boleráz one and appeared without a transitional phase. Contemporaneous with the Ózd group. There are several common vessel forms with the latter (for example: jars, bipartite bowls, pedestalled goblets), although significant differencies could be observed in the settlements and burial customs. The beginning of the Baden style could place into the early period of the classical Baden Culture, while its end spreads over the Early Bronze Age.

3. The Ózd style could be distinguished from the find material of Borsod county and correspond with the Ózd-Piliny group of the Late Baden Culture outlined earlier. Its
distribution and chronological position partly modified in the light of the new results. The most important amongst these the clarification its chronological relationship with the Viss group. Beside this the defining of the time of its beginning and end remains questionable. It is probable that like the Viss group it appeared in the end of the Boleráz and alive the beginning of the Early Bronze Age. The most characteristic vessel types are: conical scoops, flat cups, pots with brushed surface and anthropomorphic urns. Its sites can be found mostly in the vicinity of Ózd and in the centre parts of Borsod county (Cserehát – between the rivers Sajó and Hernád). The sites are generally hilltop settlements situated on the higher regions. The Ózd group has two cemeteries in this area characterized by anthropomorphic urns and stone packings above the graves. The distribution of the Ózd style can be followed northward and northwestward beyond the county.

About the Late Copper Age settlements there is little information, although their remains can be found in several sites. In Borsod county basically three settlement types could be observed. The open-air settlements are situated in the river valleys and floodplains. The hilltop settlements could be found in the largest number in the vicinity of Ózd. The appearance of the hilltop settlements is considered as the result of economical and social changes. Its function could be defensive, but more likely these were administrative, trade and production centres. The third category is represented by the cave settlements. The stray finds refer to periodical settlements. The appearance of the Boleráz style in this cave sites is considered as a new result.

About the burial customs there are sure data from three sites (Mezőcsát-Hörcsögös, Ózd-Center, Szentsimon-Kenderföldék). These represent basically two variations. At Mezőcsát inhumation and cremation graves have been found at the same time. The cemeteries of the Ózd region are characterized by urn graves.

I studied the chronological position of the Late Copper Age from several points of view. The results of the tipo-chronological analysis could be corresponded broadly to the system of Nemejcova-Pavukova, although in addition the clear separation of the earlier (Boleráz) and the classical Baden (Baden IIB-IV) periods, the finer classification was not possible. Therefore I worth considering Tünde Horváth’s opinion about the aggregation of the types classified into the Baden IIB-III-IV phases and focuses on regional differences (HORVÁTH T. 2011, 61). The analysis of the horizontal stratigraphy in the settlements not indicate any significant typological differences between the groups. In these cases the Boleráz finds could not been separated from the classical Baden ware. This could means that the two styles were partly contemporaneous, but it is more probable that in this case the small quantity of finds in secondary position represent the sporadic remains of a previous settlement. The questions of the absolute chronology remains unclear in the present state of research, because we have only two indirect data from the county.

In the development of the Late Copper Age in Borsod county two large chronological units can be distinguished.
1. The earlier period of the Late Copper Age which is represented by the distribution of the Boleráz style (the find material of the Baden IB-IC-IIA phases).

2. The second part of the Late Copper Age which embrace the classical Baden Culture (Baden IIB-III-IV). At this time two similar, but in several traits different groups appeared in this region. The first one consist of the sites with Baden style on the lowlands of the county. The second one is the Ózd style. Its sites have been found in the Northwestern part of the county in the higher regions. The two units correspond to the Viss and Ózd-Piliny groups outlined by the earlier research. The groups are contemporaneous – at least partly – but maybe their whole development was parallel. The life of these groups begins at the end of the Boleráz period, although because the lack of the transition phase the context of the appearance is unclear. The situation is roughly the same in the case of the very end of the Late Copper Age in Borsod county. There are signs which indicate that the Viss and Ózd-Piliny groups could live to the beginning of the Early Bronze Age. But is questionable that we can count on their existence in the next phases of the Early Bronze Age.

Based on the above written the main results of the doctoral dissertation are summarized in the followings:

1. The collection and detailed typological study of the Late Copper Age finds and sites in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county.

2. Demonstration of the clear, but sporadic presence of the Boleráz period on the territory of Borsod county.

3. The partition of the Boleráz and classical Baden find materials which have no chronological relationship indicated by the inner chronology of the settlements.

4. The definition of two units divided by the certain characteristics of the pottery within the classical Baden period. These units correspond to the Viss and Ózd-Piliny groups outlined by the previous research.

5. The more accurate definition of the find materials of the two groups.

6. Demonstration of the differences between the Viss and Ózd-Piliny groups manifested in the settlement types, burial customs and other features.

References

BANNER 1956

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