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SZENTHE GERGELY

*Szerkesztők*  
FÜZESI ANDRÁS, TARBAY JÁNOS GÁBOR

*Olvasszerkesztő*  
BÖRÖCZKI TAMÁS

*A szerkesztőbizottság tagjai*  
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## HALLSTATT PERIOD HOARD FROM SOMLÓ HILL

Bence Soós\*  – János Gábor Tarbay\*\*  – Tamás Péterváry\*\*\* 

*In January 2023, the National Institute of Archaeology of the Hungarian National Museum launched a new research programme, the aim of which has been to explore the Somló Hill (Somló-hegy) (Veszprém County), a site neglected by systematic field research focusing on Late Bronze Age (LBA) and Early Iron Age (EIA) inhabitation. Somló Hill was often considered one of the most important EIA power centres in the western part of the Carpathian Basin. However, this notion was based mainly on funerary evidence partially unearthed from nearby burial mounds. Beyond doubt, these burials are associated with a prominent elite in the Ha C Period that maintained long-ranging contacts with communities in the (north)west and south. By contrast, virtually nothing is known about either the extent of the EIA settlement both in geographical and chronological terms, its inner structure, or the activity of the community associated with it. In this paper, we aim to show some of the first results of the field research conducted in the last months on the hill and to introduce the first documented EIA hoard of Somló Hill. The typo-chronological evaluation of the hoard suggests that it was deposited in the Late Hallstatt Period, i.e. the Ha D2–D3 phases.*

*2023 januárjában a Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum Nemzeti Régészeti Intézete egy új kutatási programot indított, melynek célja, hogy felderítse az elmúlt száz évben a késő bronzkori és kora vaskori kutatások szempontjából szisztematikusan kevésbé vizsgált Somló-hegyet (Veszprém megye). A Somló-hegyet a kutatás a kora vaskor egyik legfontosabb hatalmi központjának tartja a Dunántúlon, ugyanakkor ez a felismerés elsősorban a hegy környezetében feltárt halomsírok értékelésére támaszkodik. Ezek a Ha C időszakra keltezhető temetkezések kétségkívül egy kiemelkedő csoport jelenlétét sugallják, amely távoli kapcsolatokat tartott fenn (észak)nyugat és dél felé. Ezzel ellentétben a hegytetőn körvonalazott kora vaskori településről szinte semmilyen információ nem áll rendelkezésre sem térbeli és kronológiai kiterjedésével, sem belső szerkezetével, sem az ott lakó közösség tevékenységeivel kapcsolatban. Jelen tanulmányban az elmúlt hónapokban lezajlott terepi kutatások első eredményeit és a Somló első dokumentált kora vaskori depóletét mutatjuk be. A leletek tipokronológiai elemzése alapján arra lehet következtetni, hogy a tárgyakat a késő Hallstatt-időszakban, azaz a Ha D2–D3 periódusokban deponálhatták.*

**Keywords:** Hallstatt Period, hilltop settlement, metal detector survey, hoard

**Kulcsszavak:** Hallstatt-időszak, magaslati telep, fémkereső-műszeres lelőhely-felderítés, kincslet

### Introduction

The 458-metre-high Somló-hegy (Somló Hill) is a volcanic butte emerging from the landscape of the Somló-Devecser Plain at the southern fringes of the Little Hungarian Plain. Since the 19th century, the Somló Hill was considered one of the most important Early Iron Age (EIA) power centres in the western part of the Carpathian Basin. This opinion

stems from the evaluation of the graves found between 1870 and 1928 on and around the hill. Ever since our understanding of how EIA communities used Somló Hill has been based dominantly on funerary evidence. In January 2023, the National Institute of Archaeology launched a new research project to re-evaluate all available evidence and collect and interpret new data with systematic field research on Somló Hill.

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*The Early Iron Age on Somló Hill in light of the previous research*

The first documented EIA grave on Somló Hill came to light in the late 1870s when workers in a vineyard north of the Séd Spring (Séd-patak) found the bones of a man and a horse. According to the report by Iván Ádám, headmaster of the secondary school in Sümeg, who inspected the location and the finds, the grave also contained a large black pot, a bronze hatchet, a 3.2-cm-long bronze tube, and a bronze kettle (Ádám 1880, 319). Subsequently, Ádám carried out investigations in the vicinity of the spring. These led to the discovery of several ceramic sherds some 10–12 metres from the grave, with, importantly, some graphite-coated ones among them (Ádám 1880, 320).

Ádám also mentions a third findspot at the foot of the hill, where a local landlord had found ‘heaps of stones and hearths’. As for the prehistoric artefacts, Ádám writes about spearheads, swords without crossguards, and iron rings (Ádám 1880, 321). However, since he did not include any depictions of these items in his publication, their chronological position can hardly be estimated. Nevertheless, a Hallstatt Period horse gear suggests an EIA site there (Ádám 1880, 322, Fig. 69). Although he only reports on artefacts and sites in the vicinity of the Séd Spring, i.e. the western slope of the hill, he mentions in his article that he also knows of prehistoric finds from the eastern and northern part of the Somló Hill. However, Károly Kleiszl, the person responsible for collecting the finds and the related data is mentioned only in a note (Ádám 1880, 323).

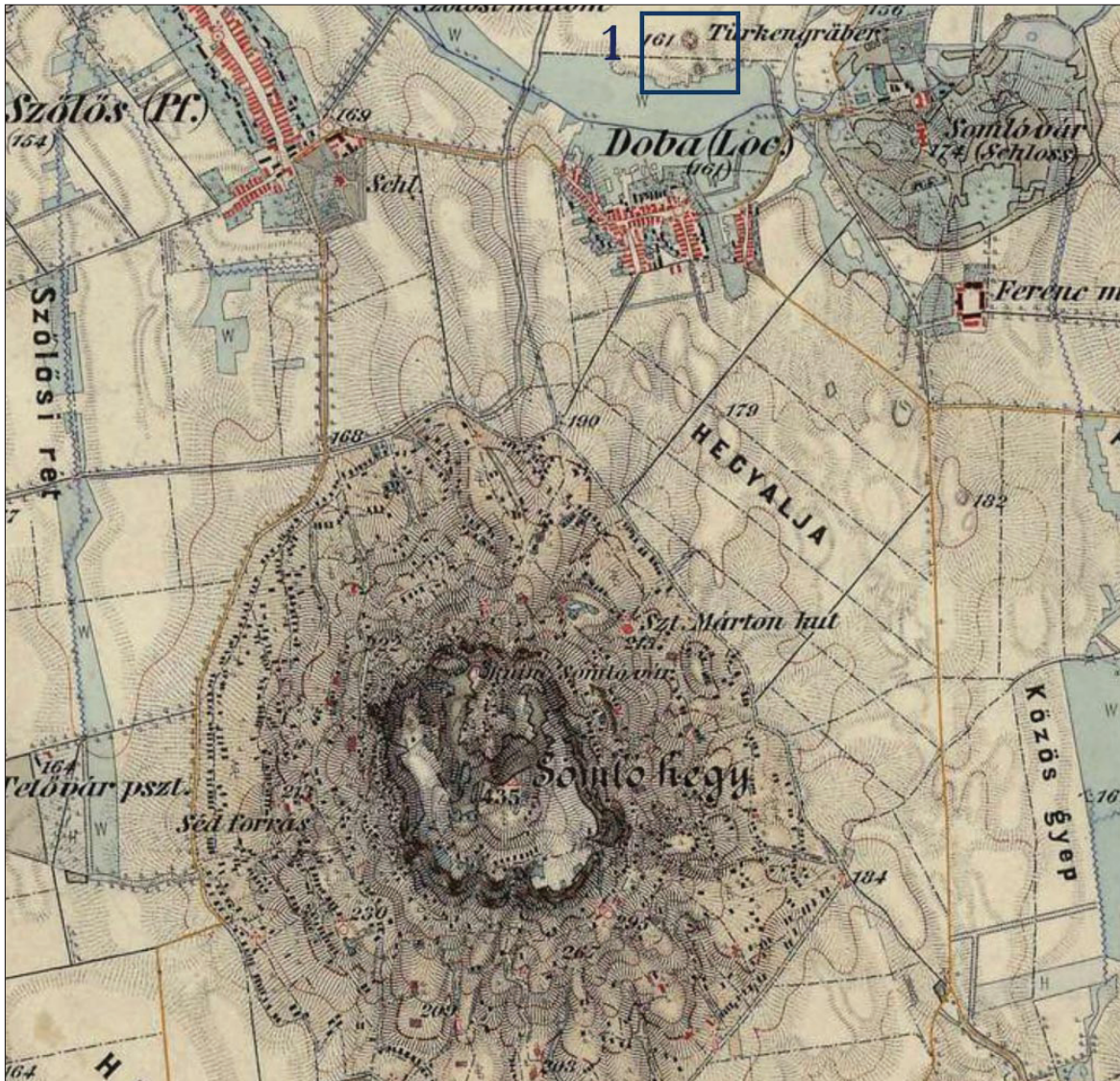


Fig. 1. The location of Doba, Török-dombok site (a tumulus cemetery) in relation to Somló Hill  
1. kép. Doba, Török-dombok lelőhely elhelyezkedése a Somló-hegyhez képest

As his correspondence with József Hampel suggests, Károly Kleiszl, a local overseer apprentice, had been collecting ancient artefacts enthusiastically on and around Somló Hill since the mid-1870s (MNM Central Archive, Call no. 346/1880). Since he lived in Doba, a village north of the hill, his discoveries mainly originate from the northern slopes of the hill. In his article published in 1883, he introduces the site 'Kerekdomb' on the northern slope of Somló Hill, at a distance of some 500 metres west of the Szent Márton Spring (Kleiszl 1883, 155–156). Apparently, his excavations there led to the discovery of some graves with pottery vessel sets and iron spears. Based on the latter, later publications suggested that these are EIA burials (Bakay et al. 1970, 88). However, since neither the finds nor depictions about them survived, this assumption must be considered with some reservation. Károly Kleiszl proceeded with his excavations at the 'Kerekdomb' site. In 1885, he described his results and the discovered finds in more detail. At this time, he wrote about cremation burials with graphite-coated pots with knobs. These, indeed, suggest EIA presence, but since he also found several polished stone tools and what is probably an LBA hoard (see Tarbay et al. 2023), the Kerekdomb site surely holds evidence of use in multiple prehistoric periods (Kleiszl 1885, 116–117).

A letter by József Hampel on 5 July 1880 suggests that Kálmán Darnay was the one who had drawn Hampel's attention to Károly Kleiszl's collection. As Darnay was Kleiszl's schoolmate in Sümeg, it is hardly surprising that he knew about his investigations on and near Somló Hill (Darnay 1899, 50). Kálmán Darnay, however, is more important than his former schoolmate when it comes to the early archaeological research of the hill.

Darnay's first published discovery on the hill was an EIA burial on the northern slope. Apparently, he was not present at the discovery, but the grave, containing the poorly preserved bones of a man and a horse, was reportedly found under large basalt slabs. The man lay in a supine position in the grave with an iron sword on his left side. There was also an iron bridle with bronze phalerae next to the horse's skull (Darnay et al. 1895, 318; Darnay 1899, 62). Later publications refer to this burial as 'Doba 1' and date the assemblage to the Ha C Period (Teržan 1990, 163; Pare 1992, 198; Metzner-Nebelsick 2002, 205). Another grave, containing three iron spearheads and a pot, came to light on the northern slopes of Somló Hill; however, Darnay did not discuss this as-

semblage in detail (Darnay et al. 1895, 318). The article published in 1895 also presents a tumulus burial now referred to as 'Doba 2' (Metzner-Nebelsick 2002, 300). Importantly, in contrast to Darnay, Károly Kleiszl describes the location of the site relatively accurately; as a result, one can be fairly sure that the tumulus he excavated in the 1880s is the largest among the so-called 'Török-dombok' ('Turkish mounds') some half a kilometre north of the modern village of Doba (Fig. 1). This tumulus group is clearly visible on various maps and archival aerial photos. According to Kleiszl's description, the excavation was well-documented at the time. A 4–5-metre-wide trench running from north to south was opened in the 7–8-metre high mound with a diameter of approximately 31 metres (Darnay et al. 1895, 320).

Like the graves Darnay described, the burial in the tumulus was covered with large basalt slabs. According to Kleiszl, it contained an exceptionally large number of potsherds, but sadly, these are not discussed in detail. By contrast, the metal finds received more attention from the authors. Four groups of metal finds could be distinguished. Besides an iron sword with a bronze pommel, the weapons in the grave included iron spearheads of various sizes and iron axes of different types (Darnay et al. 1895, 320–322). Some of the latter probably were rather tools than weapons (Nebelsick 1994, 345). A second, smaller group comprises horse bridles and trappings, namely, bronze phalerae. Scholars tend to determine the chronological position of the burial based on the jewellery pieces and elements of attire. The authors of the original publication of the finds presented a bimetal pin and two beaded bronze bracelets. Based on these, the funeral and the building of the tumulus could have taken place in the Ha C2 Period (Kemenczei 1995, 88; Metzner-Nebelsick 2002, 301). The fourth group of metal grave goods includes bronze vessels. During the excavation of the burial mound, three bronze ladles and a wide-rimmed bowl came to light; however, Louis D. Nebelsick suggested that the original set could have also included a large container, probably a situla, which either had not been added to the grave or was not found during the excavation (Nebelsick 1994, 341). Importantly, the authors only mentioned two ladles, but one of Kleiszl's letters dated around the discovery suggests that they had found three (HNM Central Archive, Call. No. 107/1881). Similar sets of multiple metal vessels of various types and functions appear in the eastern Hallstatt zone first in the



Ha C2 phase (Nebelsick 1994, 341); hence, the vessels seem to corroborate the chronological position of the grave.

Kálmán Darnay published the first comprehensive overview of Somló Hill's prehistory in 1899. In this work, he described the previous discoveries again and presented additional and new information, e.g. that the finds recovered from the large tumulus near Doba had eventually entered his collection in Sümeg (Darnay 1899, 67). Importantly, however, he introduced several new Iron Age discoveries. Unfortunately, these are all chance finds randomly unearthed during agricultural works in various vineyards on the slopes of the hill (Darnay 1899, 71). Among the finds, the horse bridles and trappings are the ones whose chronological position is, by and large, estimable. Generally, they date to the early Hallstatt Period (Metzner-Nebelsick 2002, 316–337).

Darnay published newly discovered EIA finds from Somló Hill in 1904. The report suggests that these items had also been found on the western slopes of the hill, near the Séd Spring (Darnay 1904, 71–72). The iron *Ärmchenbeil* represents a characteristic EIA weapon type, specimens of which also occur in the graves found on and around the hill (Darnay et al. 1895, II. 3; Patek 1993, Abb. 59. 8). The burial in the tumulus near Doba indicates that, besides swords and axes, spears were also an indispensable part of the equipment of EIA warriors in the community associated with Somló Hill. As a result, the idea that the iron spearheads Darnay presented originate from the EIA cemetery near the Séd Spring is conceivable (Darnay 1904, Fig. 5–7). Importantly, determining the typo-chronological position of horse bridles is easier than that of iron spearheads. Three iron bridles are among the finds discovered in the vicinity of the Séd Spring. Based on analogies, these probably originate from the Ha C period (Kemenczei 1995, 85). The boat-shaped brooches are even more certainly of EIA origin (Darnay 1904, 75, 3–5). Such brooches tend to appear among the grave goods of burials dated to the Ha C2 phase in the western part of the Carpathian Basin (Fekete 1985, 76). Finally, the cross-shaped strap divider (Darnay 1904, 75, 1–2) represents a Ha C phase-type whose eponymous site is the Séd Spring, according to Martin Trachsel (Trachsel 2004, 478).

The item Darnay published in 1913 is supposed to have been found near the Séd Spring, too. The bronze female figurine holding a pot on her head is

probably the most unique EIA find from Somló Hill. Although Darnay suggested that it could have been found in a supposed EIA cemetery near the spring, frankly, nothing is known about the circumstances of its discovery (Darnay 1913, 408), and, therefore, its chronological position is hardly determinable. Importantly, however, similar EIA bronze anthropomorphic figurines tend to appear in mortuary contexts north of the Alps (Rebay-Salisbury 2016, 116).

Lajos Márton also published his overview of the EIA brooches in a series of studies in 1913, in which he presented some brooches from Somló Hill. Darnay had already published some of them, while a few were new to the public. These were bought by the Hungarian National Museum (HNM) from József Lichtneckert, an antique dealer, who sold several items allegedly found on Somló Hill, including the boat-shaped brooch with a transversal rib and elaborately decorated bow, to the museum between 1904 and 1907. According to the typological classification by Mária Fekete, the brooch belongs to Serie 'F' (Fekete 1985, 77).

The items from Somló Hill acquired by HNM between 1904 and 1907 were published in the monography of Sándor Gallus and Tibor Horváth (Gallus, Horváth 1939, Pl. 52–53). Most finds are, again, horse bridles and trappings; however, there are some weapons and jewellery items as well. Unfortunately, no information about the circumstances of their discovery is available (Gallus, Horváth 1939, 48). In his 1995 article, Tibor Kemenczei evaluated the harness elements and concluded that the artefacts originated from the early Hallstatt Period (Kemenczei 1995, 89).

Already, the Doba tumulus strongly suggested that the importance of Somló Hill in the EIA cannot be fully understood without evaluating the surrounding burial sites. This notion is underlined by the tumuli south of the Somló, near Somlónásárhely. Already in 1878, Flóris Rómer reported that there were some thirteen earthen mounds near Somlónásárhely (Rómer 1878, 179). However, excavations did not take place until 1928. In the fall of 1928, railway workers began to quarry a burial mound of 20–22 m diameter in the north-western part of the village. Soon, they stumbled upon large basalt rocks and pottery sherds, iron and bronze items. After the local museum officials had been alerted, Gyula Rhé led the rescue excavation of the tumulus (Rhé 1929, 3). The excavation revealed that the tumulus contained a grave with various iron weapons and tools, horse trappings, and a large set of ceramic vessels.

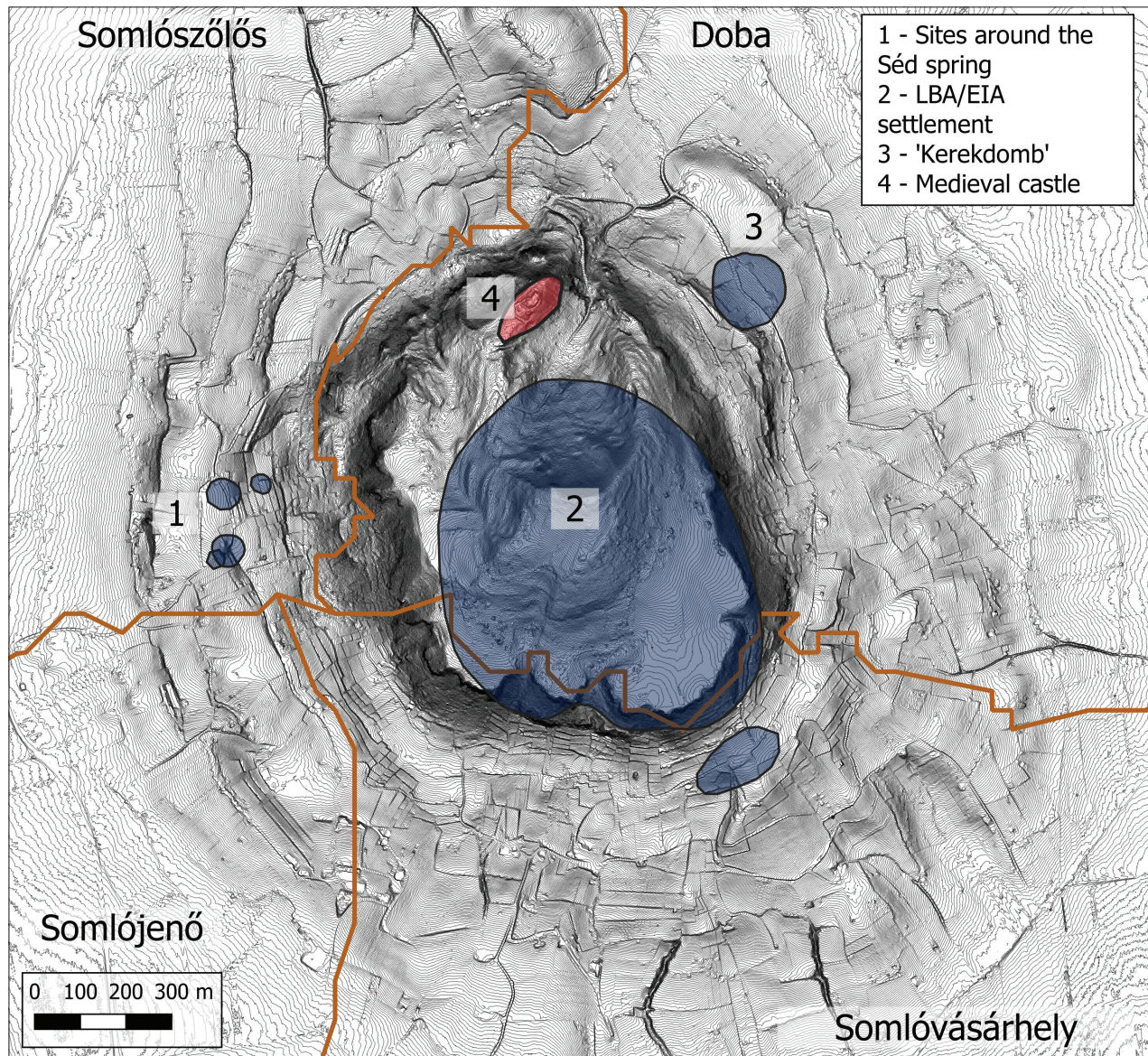


Fig. 2. Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age sites on Somló Hill in the national register of archaeological sites  
2. kép. A közhiteles műemléki nyilvántartásban rögzített késő bronzkori és kora vaskori lelőhelyek a Somló-hegyen

Contrary to the burial unearthed north of Doba, the burial mound yielded no bronze vessels. What it did contain, though, was a stone burial chamber and the remains of a four-wheeled wagon with a bronze phalera of Greek origin inside (Horváth 1969, 110–116; Egg 1996).

After the excavation of the burial mounds near Somlővásárhely, there is a forty-year hiatus in the research of the prehistory of Somló Hill. Although several important publications were completed between 1930 and 1970 (e.g. Gallus, Horváth 1939; Patek 1968), there were neither new fieldwork sessions on the hill nor large-scale acquisitions of stray finds. Patek gave an overview of the previous discoveries on and around the hill and concluded that the

hill was constantly used throughout both LBA and the subsequent EIA (Patek 1968, 37–38); however, she stressed that compelling evidence of an LBA and EIA settlement on the hilltop was not available (Patek 1968, 38).

In 1970, the third volume of the Archaeological Topography of Hungary (MRT) project was published. Researchers contributing to the volume collected archaeological data both on the spot and in archives. Of course, the topographical overview of Somló Hill largely reflects the results of Kleiszl's and Darnay's works. Hence, they argue that most EIA finds from the site in museum collections probably originate either from the western slopes of the hill, i.e. near the Séd Spring, where Darnay located the

‘EIA cemetery’ or from the north-eastern part where Kleiszl opened his trenches (Bakay et al. 1970, 213). In addition, however, the volume proposes that an extensive prehistoric settlement occupied the top of the volcanic hill (Fig. 2). The authors collected several potsherds of large vessels with everted rims and inverted bowls. As a result, they suggest that the settlement dates to the LBA and the EIA; however, they could not specify the dating of the site (Bakay et al. 1970, 89). Also, based on reports of local winery owners, once there could have been burial mounds on the southern slopes of the hill. Unfortunately, the authors could not verify these accounts (Bakay et al. 212).

In 1993, Erzsébet Patek presented the first overview of EIA in western Hungary. She highlighted that although there were a number of significant EIA finds from the region around Somló Hill, well-documented and systematic research, especially of settlements, was nearly unprecedented (Patek 1993, 62). However, she highlights that in the Marcal Region, i.e. the plain of the Marcal River in the north-western foreground of the Bakony Mountains, prominent hilltops in the landscape seem to occupy a central position in the EIA settlement network (Patek 1993, 63).

Two such prominent hilltop settlements are known in said region: besides Somló Hill, Ság Hill (Ság-hegy) seems also to have been an important centre (Lázár 1951; Lázár 1955; Nebelsick 1994, 329–336). Similar to the Somló, Ság Hill is also surrounded by tumulus burials, but unlike the former, there is a large body of archaeological material available from the settlement, which led scholars to believe that this must have operated an important metal workshop during EIA (Fekete 1985, 87; Jerem 1986, 108).

However, since data about the EIA habitation of the top of Somló Hill is scarce at best, interpretations suggesting the importance of it in the EIA settlement network are largely based on evidence originating from the burials on the hill and in the surrounding landscape. The tumuli excavated near Doba and Somlóvásárhely and the custom of placing iron swords in the graves strongly suggest the presence of an elite who possibly had strong links to the EIA communities north of the Alps (Metzner-Nebelsick 2017, 361; Teržan 2021, 425). In this sense, the elite associated with Somló Hill shows dissimilarities with the prominent group whose members were buried in the mounds around Ság Hill, as there are neither iron swords nor bronze vessels and wagon parts in

the burial mounds in the area of the latter. Hence, while Ság Hill definitely seems an adequate candidate for an EIA production centre in the Marcal Region, seeing the currently available body of evidence, this cannot be attested in the case of Somló Hill, which, nevertheless, seems to be also a power centre in the western part of the Carpathian Basin (Egg 1996, 352; Metzner-Nebelsick 2017, 361; Ilon 2018, 14).

On the surface, the Somló seems to be a standard example of an EIA hilltop settlement with burial mounds of high-status individuals nearby, akin to Ság Hill, Süttö, Nagyberki-Szalacska, Kaptol, and Poštela. However, the lack of intensive fieldwork on Somló Hill and the virtual non-existence of data about the EIA settlement on the Hilltop make it a perfect candidate for investigation.

#### *EIA on Somló Hill in light of new research*

In January 2023, the National Institute of Archaeology launched a new research project (Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age in the Somló Region, NRI 405350) in order to better understand how LBA and EIA communities used and interacted with the landscape of the Somló Hill and its surroundings, and how they coped with the challenges it set against them. Another aim of the project has been to collect and evaluate data about how these communities were integrated into the local, regional, and inter-regional social, cultural and trade networks. However, the initial step had to be the clarification of the archaeological topography of the upper zone of the hill where the surveys of the early 1970s localised the LBA/EIA settlement. To this end, with the help of volunteer metal detectorists, we conducted field surveys on the hill plateaus. Since late January, we have spent sixteen days on field. The number of participating volunteers varied between three and forty. Due to the dense undergrowth in the woods covering the hill, fieldwork concentrated on the fields on the south-eastern and the western plateaus.

As for the EIA, our main question of research was whether there is, indeed, a settlement on the hill which is contemporaneous with the burials in the tumuli north and south of it. Also, what are the dimensions of such a settlement, both in geographical and chronological terms? The Somló Hill seems to display traces of several artificial terraces and other artificial formations; however, due to the medieval fortification on the northern part and the intensive viticulture in the 18th–20th centuries, it is

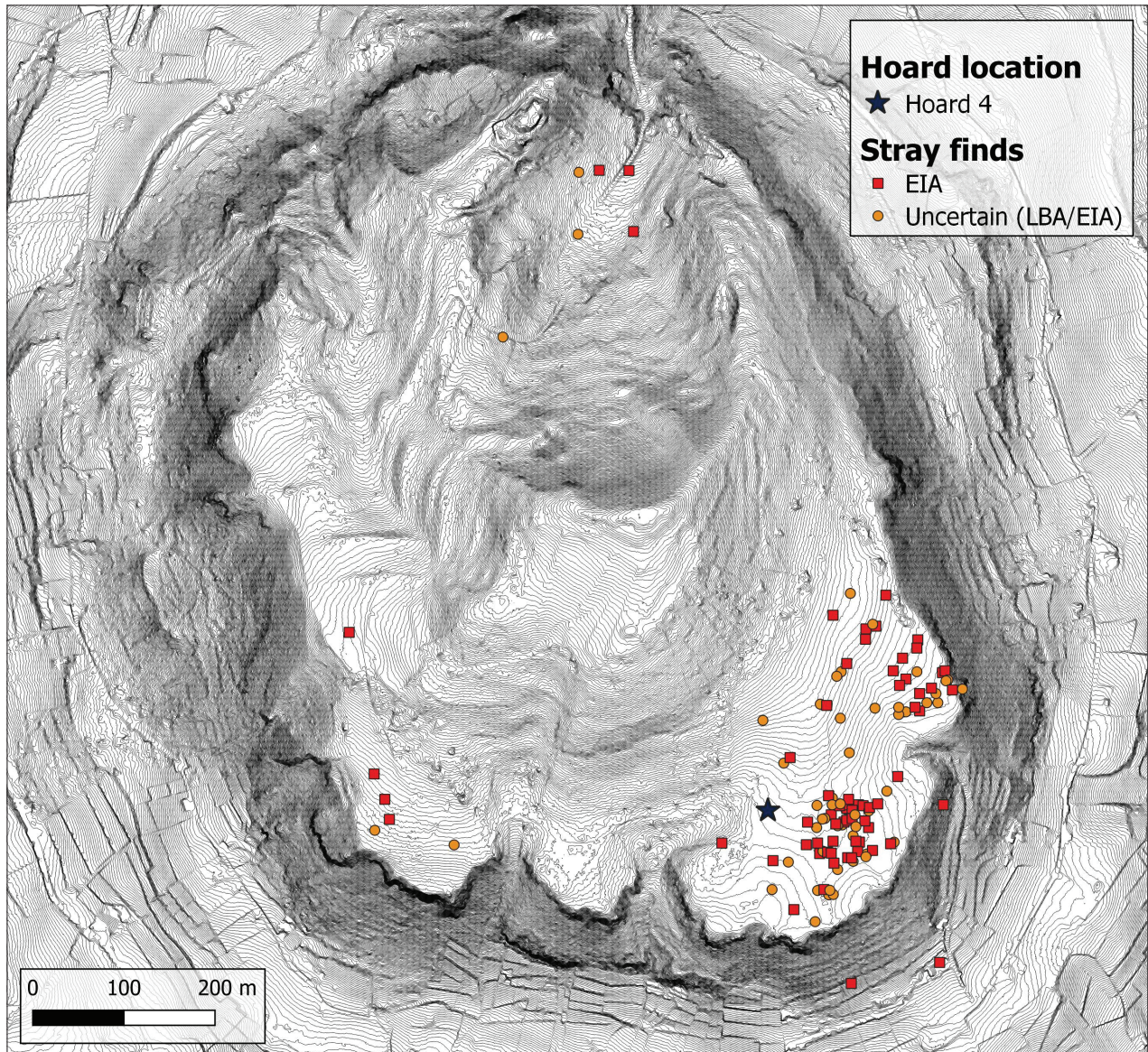


Fig. 3. Map of EIA metal finds found in 2023 on Somló Hill  
 3. kép. A Somló-hegyen 2023-ban talált kora vaskori fém szórványok térképe

difficult today to form hypotheses about its prehistoric modifications. In addition, the question arises whether the LBA and EIA settlements are continuous, as Erzsébet Patek had already suggested (Patek 1968). Furthermore, the tumuli near Doba and Somlólóvászárhely, as well as the burial ground near the Séd Spring, yielded artefacts which strongly suggest the presence of a prominent elite group. We might ask whether the presence of such a group is also indicated by finds originating from the top of the hill. Finally, we wanted to look into what kind of functions of the settlement are reflected in the archaeological material in the upper zones of the hill and whether anything would corroborate the central role of the hill in the EIA settlement network.

Between late January and late September 2023, we found seventy EIA items (Fig. 3). Most of these came to light on the largest basalt plateau of the hill, an area of approximately 9 hectares in the southeastern part. Importantly, this is the area where the great majority of the LBA finds occurred (see Tarbay et al. 2023). Apparently, the finds concentrated close to the edge of the plateau; prehistoric items only seldom occur on the higher part of the plateau, although this pattern could be connected to taphonomic processes.

As discussed earlier, elements of horse harnesses represent a dominant group among the stray finds recovered from Somló Hill. Based on the evidence the horse bridles and trappings provide, Tibor Kemenczei

suggested that Somló Hill could have been an important innovation centre at the advent of EIA in the western part of the Carpathian Basin (Kemenczei 1995, 89–90). Thus, it is hardly surprising that such findings occur among those recovered in 2023. An ornate bronze button (*Fig. 4. 1*) came to light from the south-eastern part of the large basalt plateau. The item can be assigned to the IId variant of the C type of buttons in Carola Metzner-Nebelsick's typological framework (Metzner-Nebelsick 2002, Abb. 139), and hence, it probably dates to the Ha C period.

Bronze phalerae could have also been part of horse trappings. During our fieldwork, we found two spherical bronze phalerae (only one depicted) with double loops on their backside (*Fig. 4. 2*). According to Metzner-Nebelsick, these phalerae tend to occur in Scythian Period contexts rather than the earlier stages of EIA (Metzner-Nebelsick 2002, 350). Analogies to the specimens found on Somló Hill appear among grave goods in the horse burials of the Szentes-Vekerzug cemetery (Párducz 1952, Taf. 45. 1–3; Taf. 45. 5–7; Taf. 54. 1–3; Taf. 56. 3; Taf. 57. 2–3; Taf. 63. 1–2; Párducz 1954, Taf. 2. 9–12; Párducz 1955, Taf. 6. 16–18). According to Emilian Teleaga, these horse burials date to the second phase of the cemetery (Teleaga 2017, 53), i.e. to the late Hallstatt Period. However, Tibor Kemenczei suggested a wider chronological frame for the use of bronze phalerae with double loop, namely, the 7th–4th centuries BC (Kemenczei 2009, 52). Similar phalerae did not occur among the grave goods of the EIA burials on and around the Somló Hill.

Interestingly, seeing the quantity of horse bridles in the material recovered from Somló Hill in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, their lack among the finds recovered from the hilltop during the last months is certainly worth highlighting, although, at this point, we cannot explain it.

One of the phalerae with double loops came to light in the western part of the hilltop. This area became very interesting for our current research because it yielded some other crucial EIA findings. One of them is a bronze pin guard (*Fig. 4. 3*). The discovery of this piece is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, two similar pin guards are among the finds bought by HNM from József Lichtnecker in the 1900s (*Fig. 4. 4–5*; Gallus, Horváth 1939, Pl. 52. 8, 19), but it is dubious whether they had been found in a funerary or a settlement context. The specimen we found suggests that such pin guards may very well come from the settlement on the hilltop. Secondly,

another similar pin guard was part of the assemblage discovered in Tumulus 1 near Somlónásárhely (Horváth 1969, 4. kép 10). As Markus Egg highlighted, these pin guards usually belonged to multi-headed pins (*Mehrkopfnafel*) and, based on evidence from the Hallstatt cemetery, tend to occur in graves dated to the Ha C period (Egg 1996, 348–350). In addition, as this burial shows, such pins and pin guards tended to be part of the distinguished male attire (Teržan 2021, 433).

Another remarkable find from the south-eastern plateau is an embossed semi-circular bronze plate (*Fig. 4. 6*). Dating this piece to EIA is relatively easy, given its striking similarity with the embossed plates from the so-called Kisravazd hoard (Fekete 1973, Taf. 46. 32–34, 47. 35–36). Based on the several brooches in the hoard, Mária Fekete dated the assemblage to the end of the 7th and early 6th century BC (Fekete 1973, 355). However, Marcella Nagy and her colleagues recently highlighted that the assemblage also contained now-lost horse brooches; thus, the hoard dates to the Ha D1 phase (Nagy et al. 2012, 44).

During fieldwork, we found several brooches. Three of them are bow brooches (*Fig. 4. 7–9*) from the south-eastern plateau, although different locations. They all have transversally notched bows, but only two have engraved decorations on their catchplates. In addition, their sizes vary. The Balaton Museum in Keszthely holds a fourth specimen (Fekete 1985, 83). They can be assigned to types 'g' and 'h' in the typological framework by Mária Fekete (Fekete 1985, 79), who dated these types to the Ha C2–D1 phases (Fekete 1985, 86); all in all, their use in the Late Hallstatt Period (i.e. Ha D2–3) is beyond doubt (Gál, Molnár 2004, 182).

There is another remarkable group among the finds: our metal detector surveys discovered some items of 'eastern origin'. These items allude to the contacts between the communities of the so-called Vekerzug Culture and that occupying Somló Hill. The occurrence of these items is significant, for among the hitherto published finds from the hill, those associated with the Vekerzug Culture are absent.

Trilobate bronze arrowheads with an inner socket are amongst the most recognisable finds associated with the Vekerzug Culture. While bronze arrowheads are the most common type of weaponry of the archaeological material of the eastern part of the Carpathian Basin in the 7th–4th centuries BC, they seldom appear in a settlement context (Kozubová 2019, 62). The bronze arrowhead (*Fig. 5. 2*) we found

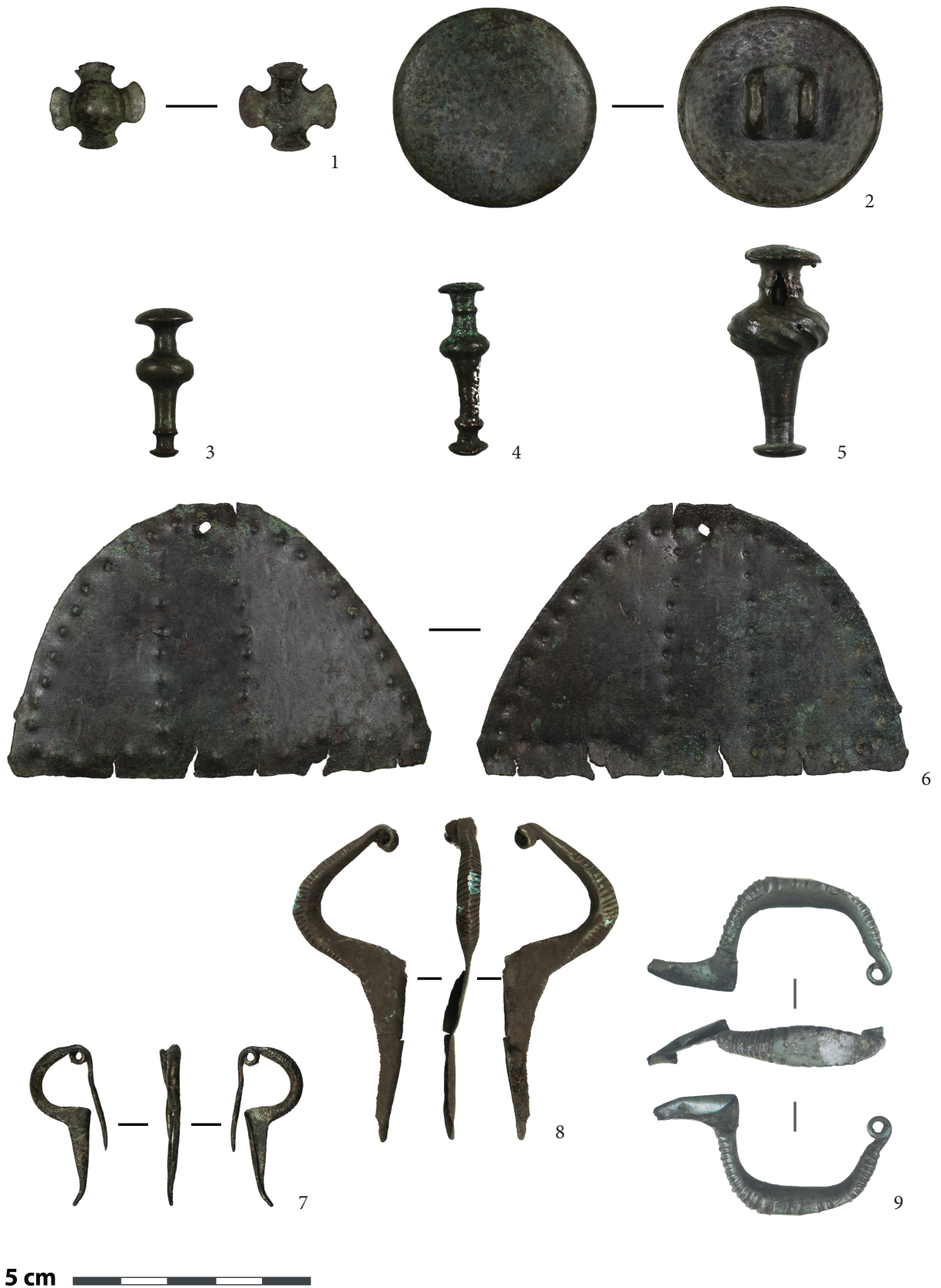


Fig. 4. 1–3, 6–9: EIA metal stray finds found in 2023 on Somló Hill; 4–5: two pin guards from Somló. Acquired by the HNM in 1904

4. kép. 1–3, 6–9: 2023-ban előkerült kora vaskori fém szórványok a Somló-hegyről; 4–5: a Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum által 1904-ben vásárolt két tűvég

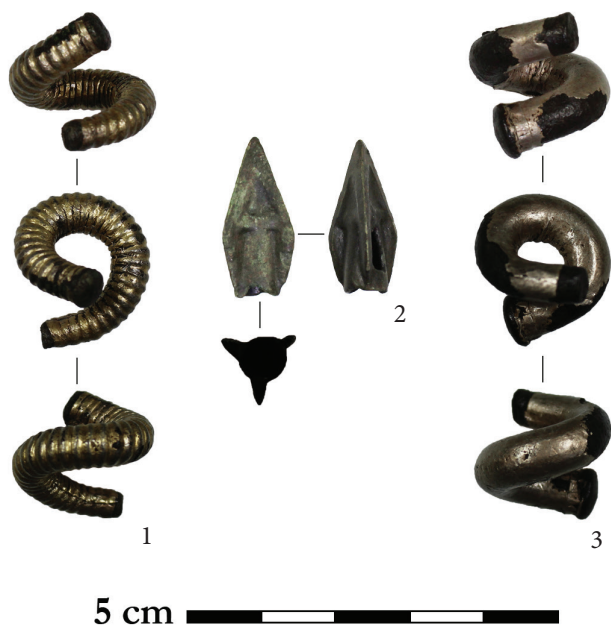


Fig. 5. Late Hallstatt Period metal stray finds found in 2023 on Somló Hill

5. kép. 2023-ban előkerült késő Hallstatt-kori leletek a Somló-hegyről

on the south-eastern plateau of Somló Hill can be assigned to Variant I1 in the typological system by Anita Kozubová (Kozubová 2019, Abb. 1). Importantly, she highlighted that specimens of this type were used for a relatively short period in the Ha D2 phase, which is an important chronological anchor in our case (Kozubová 2019, 63). In the typological system Anja Hellmuth created based on bronze arrowheads found in EIA graves in the North Pontic Region, our specimen may be assigned to Group II-I, specimens of which are relatively rare in the quiver sets of the North Pontic steppe and north of the Caucasus (Hellmuth 2010, 98–99). Apparently, the arrowheads of Group II-I were not used east of the Carpathians after the mid-7th century BC (Hellmuth 2010, Abb. 255).

Like trilobate bronze arrowheads, serpent-shaped temple rings (Fig. 5. 1, 3) are also a characteristic part of the Vekerzug archaeological material (Kozubová 2019, 106). We found two such temple rings on the top of Somló Hill, quite close to where the bronze arrowhead had been discovered. Whether there is a connection among them regarding their context requires further investigation. Recently, Anita Kozubová presented a comprehensive overview of these temple rings, and according to her, the two specimens found on the hill can be assigned to different types. According to her typological frame-

work, the transversally notched temple rings belong to Type II, while the undecorated ones belong to Type I (Kozubová 2018, 14). Also, there is significant dissimilarity between them in terms of material: while one is covered with silver foil, the transversally notched specimen is coated in electrum foil. Importantly, these serpent-shaped temple rings became popular elements of attire in the eastern part of the Carpathian Basin during the first half of the 6th century BC (Kozubová 2018, 33). We may use that as a *terminus post quem* for our specimens.

Importantly, according to the third volume of the Archaeological Topography of Hungary (MRT), the Balaton Museum in Keszthely holds a number of bronze arrowheads and yellow glass paste beads with blue ornaments (Bakay et al. 1970, 213). These could also be related to the archaeological record of the Vekerzug Culture but, unfortunately, we do not have any further information about them or their discovery. In addition, some say that the hatchet found in a grave in the close vicinity of Séd Spring in 1880 represents a type of eastern origin (Kemenczei 2010, 108).

#### *Discovery of the hoard*

The fourth hoard of Somló Hill was found by Péter Dékán, a volunteer metal detectorist participating in HNM's Community Archaeological Programme. He discovered the assemblage on 2 July 2023 during a metal detector survey of the hilltop, led by Tamás Péterváry. At around 12:50, he began to look for metals under a large stone block. He dug an amorphous hole to reach the items. Two items – iron sickles – became visible (Fig. 6). As he followed the protocol of the Programme that prohibits removing objects when more than one is visible, Péter Dékán left the finds completely undisturbed and notified Tamás Péterváry, who took pictures of the unearthed finds. Since the upper sickle was in noticeably worse condition than the lower one and the other iron items collected on the hill, he decided it should be removed for preservation. The other sickle was left in situ. Importantly, when checking the loose soil removed from above the sickles, Péter Dékán discovered a bronze brooch.

The excavation of the hoard took place on 3 July 2023; it was carried out by archaeologists János Gábor Tarbay, Tamás Péterváry, and Bence Soós with the help of university student Zsófia Török and volunteer detectorists Péter Rózsás and Edina Rózsás-Csókök.

We began the excavation by removing the back-fill from the 25-cm-deep pit dug by Péter Dékán the previous day. Subsequently, we cleaned the remaining sickle in the hole and took photos of the context. Next, we opened a nearly rectangular (94 × 99 × 89 × 103 cm) sondage around the sickle (Fig. 6), the excavation of which revealed that the sickles had been deposited in a settlement layer containing a large number of potsherds, animal bones, and daub frag-

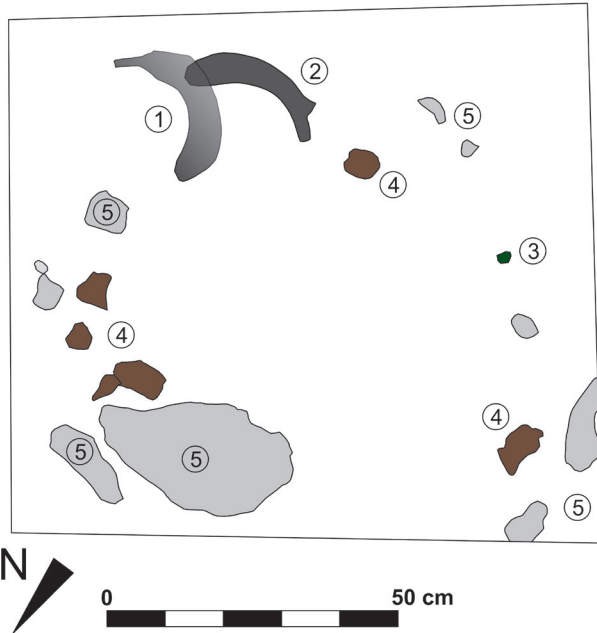


Fig 6. Photo of the in situ iron sickles (photo by Tamás Péterváry) and the sondage opened around Hoard IV. 1: Sickle No. 2; 2: sickle No. 3; 3: fragment of LBA bronze sickle; 4: potsherds; 5: stone blocks  
6. kép. Fénykép az in situ sarlókról (készítette Péterváry Tamás) és a IV. depó körül nyitott szonda felszínrajza.  
1: 2. sarló; 2: 3. sarló; 3: késő bronzkori sarlópenge töredéke; 4: kerámiatöredékek; 5: kövek

ments. Due to the large amount and density of the archaeological material, we decided that the opened sondage was too small for exploring the exact context of the hoard. We aimed to document the position of the items and leave the surrounding soil as intact as possible as we intended to carry out a larger excavation of the context of the hoard in the next phase of the research on Somló Hill.

Importantly, with the help of a volunteer metal detectorist on our team, we found a single fragment of an LBA bronze sickle [inv. no. 2023.13.4] some 40 cm west of the iron sickles (Fig. 7. 4). There is no indication that this item has any relation to the EIA assemblage.

#### Catalogue of finds

1. *Brooch* (inv. no. 2023.13.1) (field ID: 1). The object was cast in a two-piece casting mould with two negatives based on a vertical mismatch defect along the bow part. The ornament received a heavy post-casting treatment that included removing all flashes, seems, and cast surfaces, probably by rasp, file, or grinding stone. The traces of this process, in the form of striations, are well visible on the object. The holes on the back were probably made by drilling during the post-casting treatment phase. The catchplate was flat-hammered into sheet metal and bent. The pin was hammered after casting. Length: 52.52 mm. Height: 18.32 mm. Weight: 2.0 g (Fig. 7. 1).
2. *Tanged sickle* (inv. no. 2023.13.2) (field ID: 2). Iron sickle with a small hook-like tang and a large and wide blade. The object was made from a single iron ingot by hammering, traces of which are visible on every surface. This process caused material displacement on the back. The rough hammering that shaped the tang is also clearly visible. Blade thickness: 2.22 mm. Maximum blade width: 60.29 mm. Weight: 190.0 g (Fig. 7. 2).
3. *Flanged sickle* (inv. no. 2023.13.3) (field ID: 3). Flanged, iron sickle with a small spur. It has a large, curved blade. The object was hammered from a single iron ingot, traces of which can be observed on the back and at the spur in the form of material displacement. The tip of the blade was bent upon discovery, while a part broke off during transportation and was restored later. Blade thickness: 2.64 mm. Maximum blade width: 52.26 mm. Weight: 173.7 g (Fig. 7. 3).





Fig. 7. 1–3: hoard IV of Somló Hill; 4: fragment of an LBA bronze sickle  
 7. kép. 1–3: a Somló-hegyi IV. kincs tárgyai; 4: a késő bronzkori sarlópenge-töredék

#### *Typo-chronological evaluation of the finds*

##### *Velem-type brooch*

As for the chronological position of the assemblage, the most important find is the Velem-type brooch. These fibulae appeared at the end of the 6th century BC in the western part of the Carpathian Basin (Kovačević 2007, 98). Based on the finds from the settlement and cemetery at Sopron-Krautacker and further specimens, Erzsébet Jerem dated the type to the Ha D2–3 phases (Jerem 1981, 206). Velem-type brooches occur mostly in northwest Transdanubia but also in Donja Dolina along the Sava River and the settlement near Zbelava (e.g. Truhelka 1904, Taf.

71. 3; Kovačević 2007). Importantly, it is a common notion that the Velem-Szent Vid hilltop settlement is not just eponymous to the brooch type but also an important EIA centre where the workshop that produced most specimens of this type could have operated (Kovačević 2007, 98). However, all sites where Mária Fekete assumes EIA workshops producing brooches, namely Celldömölk-Sághegy, Nagyberki-Szalacska, and Keszthely-Apátdomb (Fekete 1985, 87), yielded similar specimens (Jerem 1996, 96). An interesting pattern emerges regarding the context of Velem-type brooches: most specimens were found in settlements, and such items were rarely included in grave assemblages (Jerem 1996, 95).

### *Sickles*

Iron tools of the Hallstatt Period in Transdanubia are rare or have received hardly any attention. Conceivably, the reason behind this is the limited attention paid to EIA settlements in the region in general. For this reason, when addressing the iron sickles from Somló Hill, we must rely on Etela Studeníková's assessment of such finds from the 'northeastern Alpine regions' and beyond, who determined five types based on the shape of the sickles' tang (Studeníková 2007, 52).

Sickle No. 2 in the Somló hoard can be assigned to Type II in Studeníková's typological framework. Characteristic traits of the sickles of this type are the orthogonally bent end of the tang and the slightly curved, wide blade (Studeníková 2007, 56). According to her, most specimens of Type II recovered in today's Slovakia are before the mid-6th century BC (Studeníková 2007, 56). However, as the example of the Bohdalovice hoard (southern Bohemia) shows, similar sickles also occur in La Tène Period assemblages (Michálek et al. 2014, 712).

The other sickle, No. 3, in the Somló hoard, can be assigned to Studeníková's Type V. Attributes of this type are an exceptionally wide blade, a hammered back of the blade, and a spur above the tang (Studeníková 2007, 60). Thomas Stöllner suggested that the spur often seen on EIA iron sickles indicates a technological continuity with LBA bronze sickles in Central Europe (Stöllner 2002, 105). According to Studeníková, specimens of this type occur throughout the Circum-Alpine region, and their use extended to the Early La Tène Period (Studeníková 2007, 61). However, based mainly on specimens from the Czech Republic, Ivan Čižmář and his colleagues argued that the use of such sickles is restricted to the Ha D1a–D3 phases (Čižmář et al. 2021, 34).

### *Discussion*

With the advent of EIA, a number of important transformations took place in the western part of the Carpathian Basin. Among these, the cease of depositing bronze hoards is one of the most conspicuous (Metzner-Nebelsick 2017, 368). Although EIA metal hoards are scarce there, EIA communities were not unfamiliar with the custom of depositing metal item assemblages in what is now western Hungary. Before the discovery of the Ikervár hoard in 2010, EIA research in Hungary knew of four metal depots from Transdanubia (Fekete 1999). Most interpretations

of these hoards revolved around the idea that these assemblages are somehow associated with EIA mortuary rites (Kemenczei 1996, 471; Fekete 1999, 38). In a sense, the notion that the composition of the Kurd hoard resembles the metal vessel sets placed into graves of prominent members of the communities in Northern Italy corroborates this idea to some extent (Egg, Kramer 2013, 399–402).

However, the discovery of the Ikervár hoard in 2010 gave us a new angle since this assemblage was found in settlement context. Although Marcella Nagy and her colleagues discussed the possibility of the hoard's context having a mortuary character (Nagy et al. 2012, 32–34), the fact that – contrary to other EIA hoards in Transdanubia – the Ikervár hoard was found within a contemporary settlement should not be overlooked.

This is the starting point for our discussion of Hoard IV from Somló Hill. Probably the most noticeable difference between the already-known EIA hoards from Transdanubia and the recently found one is that the former mainly comprises bronze items, whereas the latter consists of iron tools and a relatively small brooch made of bronze. Another dissimilarity arises from available evidence: contrary to jewellery and bronze vessels, tools were usually omitted from EIA metal depots. One notable exception is the whetstone and the so-called anvil of the Ikervár hoard (Nagy et al. 2012, 41). The scope of the search for analogous assemblages enlarged, we find that including iron tools in deposits was not uncommon in Central Europe in the EIA. So far, six hoards have been found on the hilltop settlement Smolenice-Molpír, five of which contained predominantly iron tools (Čambal, Makarová 2020). Similarly, the Verebce-bérc hilltop settlement near Dédestapolcsány yielded several hoards containing iron tools (V. Szabó et al. 2022, 295–296).

In both cases, iron sickles were often included in deposited assemblages. While at Verebce-bérc, at least two assemblages with multiple iron sickles were discovered (V. Szabó et al. 2022, Fig. 9. 1–2), the Molpír hillfort yielded four deposits with at least one iron sickle each (Čambal, Makarová 2020). Among the latter assemblages, we find an example closely similar to Hoard IV of Somló Hill. Hoard 2 of the Molpír hillfort consists of six iron sickles and a wheel-shaped pendant (Studeníková 2007, 48–50). This hoard is important for us for several reasons. Firstly, the assemblage included both Type II and Type V sickles according to Studeníková's typologi-

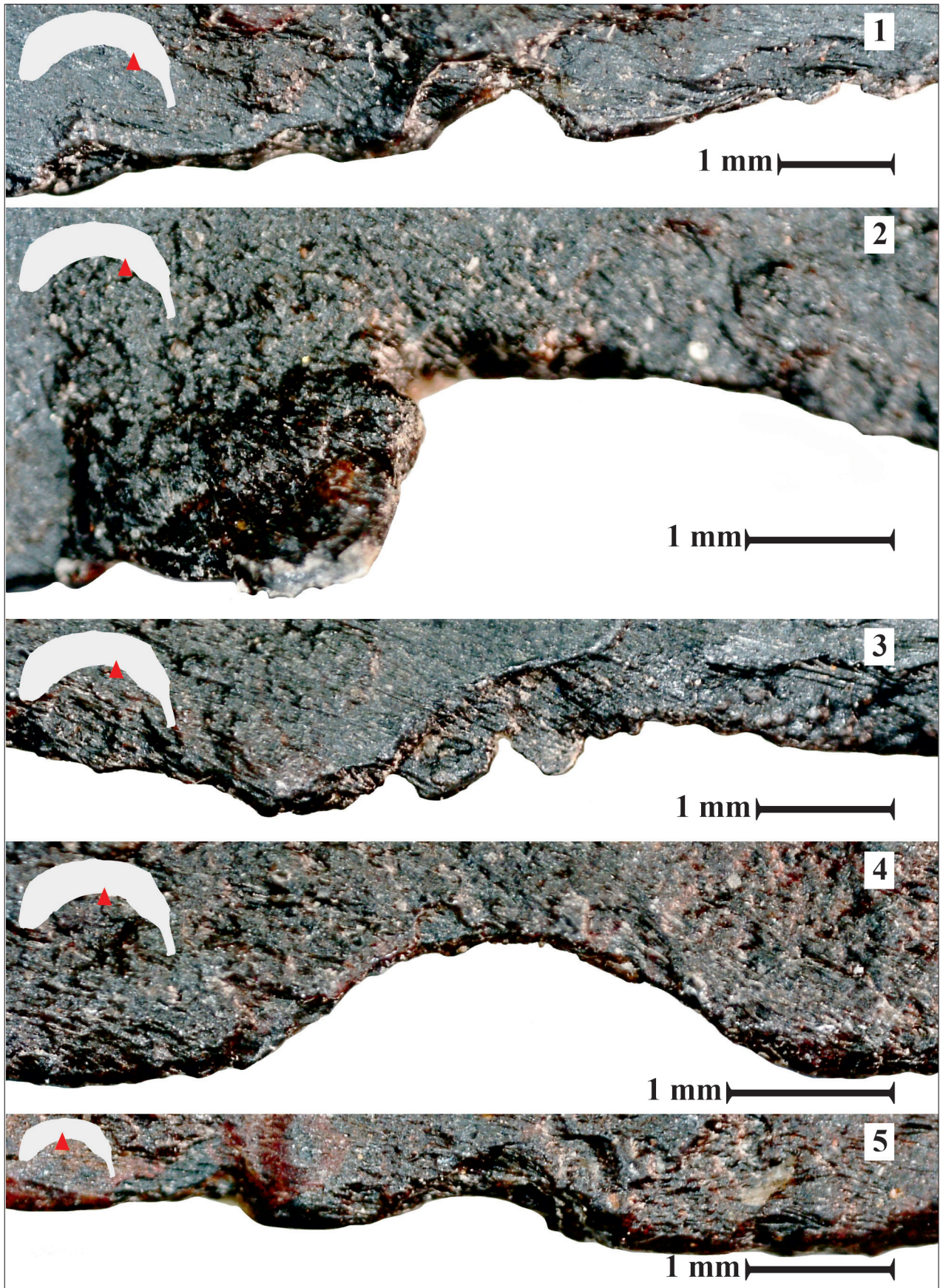


Fig. 8. Traces of use on sickle No. 2 of Hoard IV  
8. kép. A IV. depóelet 2. sarlóján megfigyelhető használati nyomok

cal framework. Secondly – similar to Hoard IV of Somló Hill –, besides iron sickles, Hoard 2 of the Molpír hillfort contained a single item, a bronze jewellery piece, which allegedly lay above the sickles (Studeníková 2007, 50). Despite this notable similarity, one must be cautious because we could not document the exact relation between the Velem-type brooch and the iron sickles in Hoard IV in detail, and no archaeologist was present at the discovery of Hoard 2 of the Molpír Hillfort.

Despite the similarities, some differences are present, too. On the one hand, while in Hoard 2 of the Molpír hillfort the single piece of jewellery is a pendant, that in Hoard IV of Somló Hill is a brooch. On the other hand, while contextual evidence, namely the destruction of the hillfort in the Ha D1 phase seemingly rules out the possibility of dating Hoard 2 to the late Hallstatt Period (Müller 2012, 262; Čambal, Makarová 2020, 222), based on the Velem-type brooch, the deposition of Hoard IV of the Somló Hill probably took place in the Ha D2–3 phases.

At this point, the question of the late Hallstatt Period inhabitation of Somló Hill's top must be addressed. It is suggested that in the first half of the 6th century BC, along with the cessation of building burial mounds, most hilltop settlements in most regions of the eastern Hallstatt zone were abandoned (Teržan 1998, 519; Egg 2013); however, Erzsébet Jerem hypothesised already in 1986 that at least some of the hilltop settlements in the western part of the Carpathian Basin could have survived the transition between the Ha D1–D2 phases. She believed that due to the importance of their metal workshops, the life on Velem-Szentvid, the hilltop settlement near Lengyel (officially known as Mucsi-Sáncok), and Ság Hill could have remained uninterrupted during the 6th century BC (Jerem 1986, 108). In her paper, Jerem did not mention the Somló Hill explicitly. However, according to Erzsébet Patek, evidence suggested that Somló Hill could have been abandoned before the Ha D2–3 phases (Patek 1986, 167).

Based on the stray finds we collected and the Velem-type brooch in Hoard IV, the inhabitation of the hill in the Late Hallstatt Period seems feasible. Fortunately, there is a growing number of investigated settlements from the period; as a result, we can compare the finds recovered from Somló Hill with the evidence collected from those sites. As mentioned earlier, most Velem-type brooches came to light from settlement contexts, which seems to apply to the specimen from Hoard IV. However, this is

not the only find that finds analogies in late Hallstatt Period settlements.

As mentioned above, small bow brooches seem to have already been in use in the Ha D1 phase, and there is ample evidence of their presence in later contexts. For instance, analogies to the bow brooch with a diamond-shaped cross-section form Somló Hill appear among the finds of Sopron-Krautacker (Jerem et al. 1984, Fig. 11. 168/4, 15.2), Győr-Ménfőcsanak, Széles-földek (Đurkovič 2017, Fig. 4. 15), and Sé-Doberdó (Gál, Molnár 2004, Taf. 8. 2).

The find material recovered from these sites also includes serpent-shaped temple rings. Besides a bow brooch with a diamond-shaped cross-section, Pit 168 of the Sopron-Krautacker settlement also yielded a serpent-shaped temple ring (Jerem et al. 1984, Fig. 11. 168/1). The use of this settlement seems to have started in the Ha D2–D3 phases (Schwellnus 2011, 369). Also, at Sé-Doberdó, one of the settlement features yielded a serpent-shaped temple ring (Gál, Molnár 2004, Taf. 14. 1). The record of the Ha D2 settlement at Alsópáhok also includes a similar temple ring (Horváth 2015, 19). Seeing these examples, it is tempting to attribute chronological significance to the two temple rings from Somló Hill, but one must refrain from doing so. It is important to note, however, that these jewellery pieces are frequent finds on late Hallstatt settlements in Transdanubia (Ilon 2017).

Bronze trilobate arrowheads are of significance when it comes to Hallstatt Period hilltop settlements in the Carpathian Basin. These were instrumental in identifying the sieges that led to the destruction of the Molpír hillfort near Smolenice (Hellmuth 2006) and the Verebce-bérc hillfort near Dédestapolcsány (V. Szabó et al. 2014). Since such arrowheads appeared among the finds unearthed by Jenő Lázár on Ság Hill's hilltop settlement, some raised the possibility that it also had to endure a siege (Chochorowski 1985, 230; Teržan 1998, 524; Hellmuth 2006, 191). Importantly, bronze arrowheads of eastern origin are common among the finds of late Hallstatt settlements in the northwestern part of the Carpathian Basin: the excavation at Koroncó-Bábota yielded two pieces (Czigány, Molnár 2020, 9, Pl. 3–4), while the settlement near Alsópáhok three (Horváth 2015, Fig. 5. 21–23). There is a notable difference, however. While most arrowheads from the besieged hilltop settlements have outer socket, those found on Late Hallstatt settlements are inner-socketed, which may suggest that the arrowhead found on Somló Hill was

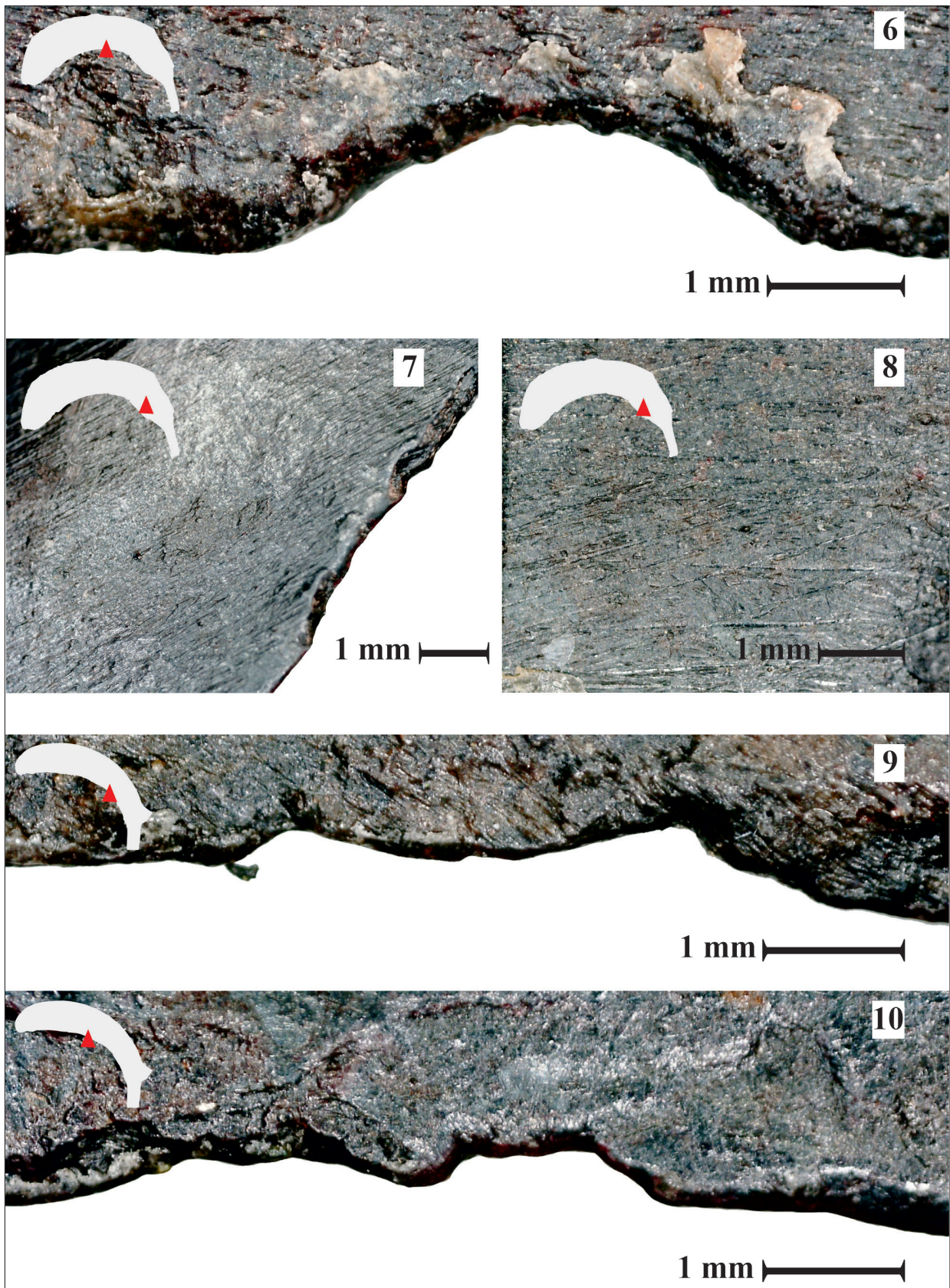


Fig. 9. 6: traces of use on sickle No. 2 of Hoard IV; 7–8: traces of hammering on sickle No. 2 of Hoard IV;  
9–10: traces of use on sickle No. 3 of Hoard IV

9. kép. 6: a IV. depóelet 2. sarlóján megfigyelhető használati nyomok; 7–8: ugyanazon kalapálás nyomai;  
9–10: használati nyomok a 3. sarlón

part of the settlement material. Also, while sieges seem to have left behind vast amounts of bronze arrowheads, the aforementioned so-called lowland sites yielded only a few pieces. In this regard the case of the settlement near Győr-Ménfőcsanak, Szélesföldek, where metal detector surveys recovered 64 bronze trilobate arrowheads with inner socket, is outstanding. Since none of them were excavated *in situ*, their interpretation is subject to debate, but their large number might raise the possibility of a siege of the settlement (Ilon 2019, 255–256). One has to keep in mind, however, that the archaeological material of the settlement and the radiocarbon dates available suggest uninterrupted inhabitation of the site during EIA (Đurkovič 2017, 505).

The siege of the Molpír hillfort near Smolenice bears significance when interpreting the EIA hoards found within the settlement. Radoslav Čambal and Erika Makarová suggested that metal tools and jewellery were deposited because of the imminent danger posed by the siege (Čambal, Makarová 2020, 222). However, other scenarios cannot be ruled out either. For instance, Sebastian Müller discussed the ritual character of the hoard found in House 2 (Hoard 1 according to Čambal and Makarová) of the Molpír hillfort and argued that its composition is similar to that of the warrior burials found near Somló Hill(!), like Doba 2 and Tumulus 1 near Somlóvásárhely (Müller 2012, 254). It is worth noting that in a burial context associated with the Lusatian Culture, iron sickles appear among the grave goods of prominent members of the community (Studeníková 2007, 64). However, the military component is missing from Hoard IV of Somló Hill. Also, iron sickles do not appear in find assemblages of the burial mounds excavated around Somló Hill or in the wider region, although that may reflect only the absence of coeval burials in the vicinity of the hill and the lack of data about iron sickles in a similar context.

Despite the lack of iron sickles in coeval burials near Somló Hill, discussing the possibility of interpreting the sickles as symbols of power or higher social status is certainly not irrelevant. Based on Studeníková's suggestion, Benedíková and Soják mentioned that, indeed, the iron sickles of the Letanovce hoard could be seen as such symbols (Benedíková, Soják 2020, 25). In fact, there is much discussion about how sickles could have had this semantic content in LBA. Again, this notion stems from the rare occurrences of bronze sickles amongst the grave goods of prominent burials equipped with weapons

and wagon parts. The sickle probably shows how the individual of high status cared about sustaining the community in terms of a successful agriculture (Deicke 2011, 103; Jahn 2013, 248).

In the case of EIA, the role of tools in status representation has been discussed in some detail (see Teržan 1994); however, iron sickles usually did not make it into elite graves. Whereas various tools of woodworking (e.g. axes, adzes, and gouges) and metalworking often appear in grave find assemblages of males in the higher echelons of society, sickles do not. Importantly, iron sickles are also exceedingly rare in the cemeteries of the Vekerzug culture and do not seem to have been associated with the elite (Kozubová 2019, 134). In addition, amongst tools, axes seem to bear 'extraordinary religious significance' and to have the capacity to convey information about the status of their owner in Hallstatt communities (Golec et al. 2023, 17). Indeed, in the scenes of situla art, axes are often associated with the slaughtering of sacrificial animals (Eibner 2014, 36).

By contrast, depictions of agricultural activities are rare in situla art and are restricted to ploughing (Eibner 2014, 36). And although these scenes seem to be related to prominent male figures, their ceremonial character is sometimes emphasised (Arnold 1999, 81; Eibner 2014, 37; Teržan 2020, 198).

However, the sickles of Hoard IV of Somló Hill seem to be functional agricultural implements. As for sickle No. 2, the cutting edge shows narrowing that is usually caused when the object is used for a long period, and the cutting edge is slowly eroded by the damages caused by the contact with rough surfaces and the continuous maintenance process that includes the hammering and sharpening of this area. Fine hammering traces along the edge from both sides also prove that this part was maintained (Fig. 9. 7–8). Besides narrowing, use-related edge damages and notches are visible along the cutting edge (Fig. 8. 1–5, Fig. 9. 1, 9–10). These damages were present on the unconserved finds, which excludes their modern origin. It also indicates that the object has not received maintenance before deposition. In addition, the cutting edge of sickle No. 3 has been carefully hammered and sharpened on both sides (Fig. 10. 13). One can observe intensive narrowing near the spur of the item, which suggests a long use period. Also, the cutting edges are uneven with use-wear traces (dents) along them (Fig. 9. 9–10, Fig. 10. 11–12). It is also worth noting that iron sickles are often found in settlement contexts without any indication of being

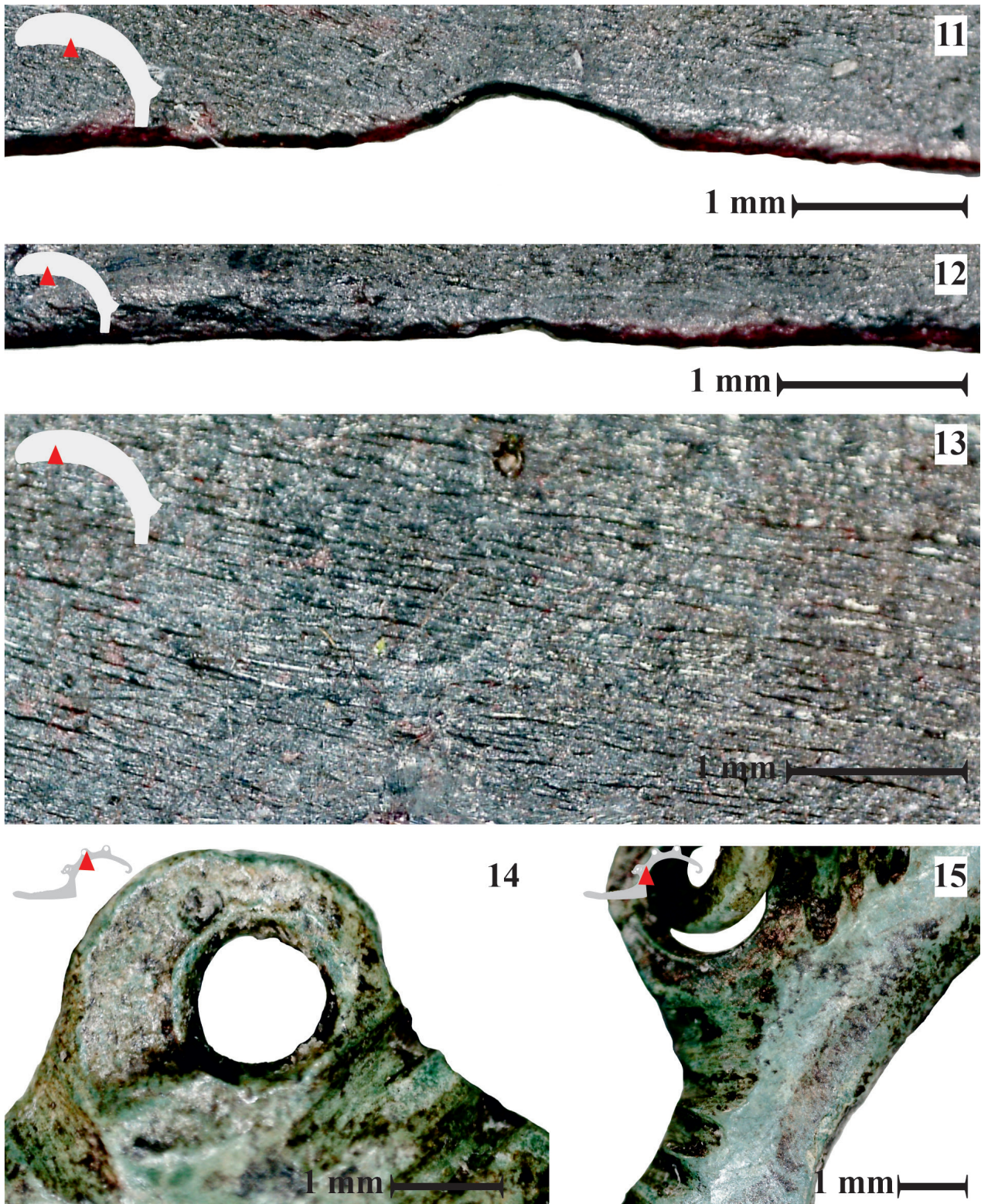


Fig. 10. 11–12: traces of use on sickle no. 3 of Hoard IV; 13: traces of hammering on sickle no. 3 of Hoard IV; and traces of use on the Velem-type brooch No. 1

10. kép. 11–12: a Somló-hegyi IV. kincs 3. sarlóján megfigyelhető használati nyomok; 13: kalapálás nyomai ugyan azon; a velemi típusú fibulán (1) azonosítható használati nyomok

associated with rites or ceremonial activities. For instance, one specimen was found within House 30 of the EIA settlement at Most na Soči (Svoljšak, Dular 2016, 210). In addition, the settlement of the Vekerzug Culture near Salgótarján also yielded an iron sickle (Vaday 2003, Fig. 2. 11).

However, the association between the sickles and the Velem-type brooch in the assemblage hardly indicates the deposition of a functional set. Like the iron sickles, the Velem-type brooch shows traces of use, too (Fig. 10. 14–15). One might argue that as Velem-type brooches can be associated with female attire (Jerem 1996, 94), the fibula might represent a ‘female component’ in the hoard. Interestingly, the ploughing scenes in situla art often appear with scenes of intercourse, probably both symbolising fertility (Eibner 2014, 37). Could this mean that Hoard IV, consisting of agricultural implements and an element of female attire, represents an offering associated with fertility rituals? Is it somehow associated with an abandoned house like Hoard 2 on the Molpír hillfort (Müller 2012, 252–254)? To answer such questions and provide a more thorough interpretation of the assemblage, the next, inescapable step is a detailed exploration of the immediate context of Hoard IV and its integration into the EIA settlement on Somló Hill.

### *Conclusion*

This paper presents the very first results of an ongoing research programme aimed at exploring the use and inhabitation of Somló Hill in EIA. Only a few conclusions can be drawn at this early stage of field research. One of the most significant results is clarifying the extensive spatial overlap between the LBA and EIA settlements on the south-eastern basalt plateau of Somló Hill. Some scholars proposed that these two settlements were continuous, but the evidence has been scarce, if any. The archaeological material we recovered with the help of volunteer metal detectorists from the upper zones of the hill

confirms the presence of a Ha C community on the south-eastern plateau. Although the funerary data gleaned in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the vicinity of Somló Hill strongly suggest the presence of a distinguished elite associated with the hill, the material we collected in 2023 corroborates this notion only to some extent. While the amount and variability of the EIA metal finds collected on the hilltop is considerable, overlaps between these and the spectrum of grave goods in the burial mounds nearby are exceedingly rare. In addition, the metal finds strongly suggest that the EIA settlement was uninterrupted until the end of the Hallstatt Period. One of the finds supporting this notion is Hoard IV, a deposited assemblage comprising two iron sickles and a Velem-type brooch. Based on the latter, the assemblage was dated to the Ha D2–D3 phases. In addition, the discovery of serpent-shaped temple rings coated with electrum and silver foil, respectively, bow brooches, and trilobate bronze arrowheads suggests the presence of a Late Hallstatt settlement on the south-eastern plateau of Somló Hill. The metal record of this settlement is similar to other Late Hallstatt settlements in the region (e.g. Sopron-Krautacker, Sé-Doberdó, Koroncó-Bábota, and Alsópáhok-Hévízdomb).

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## EGY HALLSTATT-KORI DEPÓLELET A SOMLÓ-HEGYRŐL

## Összefoglalás

2023 januárjában a Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum Nemzeti Régészeti Intézete egy új kutatási programot indított, melynek célja, hogy felderítse a Somló-hegy késő bronzkori és kora vaskori lelőhelyeit, illetve azt, hogy az említett korszakokban miként használták a hegyet és szűk környezetét az itt megtelepedő közösségek. A Somló-hegy a 19. század vége óta a Dunántúl egyik legismertebb kora vaskori lelőhelykomplexuma, amelyet gyakran a korszak egyik hatalmi központjaként azonosít a kutatás. Ez a vélemény elsősorban azokra a felfedezésekre támaszkodik, amelyek a Somló-hegy első régészeti kutatói, Kleisl Károly és Darnay Kálmán nevéhez kötődnek. Az ő leletgyűjtéseik és korai ásatásaik elsősorban a hegy nyugati oldalában és a hegy északi előterében található kora vaskori temetkezésekkel és leletanyagokkal ismertették meg a tudományos közösséget (Darnay et al. 1895). Ezekből egy a Somló-hegyhez kötődő kora vaskori elit közösség képe rajzolódott ki, amit a Somlónásárhely határában feltárt halomsírok még inkább megerősítettek (Rhé 1929). A korai kutatások eredményeit 1970-ben a Magyarország Régészeti Topográfiája 3. kötete összesítette, illetve egészítette ki azzal, hogy a Somló-hegy tetején egy „hatalmas kiterjedésű őskori település helyezkedik el” (Bakay et al. 1970, 89). Az ezt követő fél évszázad során a Somló-hegy késő bronzkorára és kora vaskorára vonatkozó kutatások és adatgyűjtések azonban elmaradtak, és az újabb publikációk továbbra is a 19. század végi, 20. század eleji felfedezésekre támaszkodnak.

Az újonnan indult kutatási program első fázisának célja, hogy önkéntesek bevonásával zajló fémkereső-műszeres lelőhely-felderítésekkel tisztázza a hegytetőn lokalizált késő bronzkori és kora vaskori település földrajzi és kronológiai kiterjedését, illetve az itt élt közösségekhez kötődő tevékenységekre vonatkozó információszerezés is célként fogalmazódott meg. Az kutatás első 9 hónapjában összegyűjtött leletanyag döntő többsége a hegy délkeleti bazaltplatójáról származik, ahol a késő bronzkori és kora vaskori szórványok elterjedése nagymértékű átfedést mutat. Eddig 70 olyan lelet került elő, melyek biztosan a kora vaskorra keltezhetők. Ezek közül kiemelendők a lószerszámelemek. Ez a tárgycsoport a korai kutatások során előkerült leletanyagban is kiemelt mennyiségben jelent meg, és megkülönböztetett figyelemben részesült (Kemenczei 1995). Jellegzetes Ha C típusú

képvisel a kis méretű kereszt alakú bronzgomb (4. kép 1), ugyanakkor az előkerült kétfüles phalerák (4. kép 2) kronológiai helyzetét a kora vaskoron belül pontosabban meghatározni problémás feladat. A díszgombhoz hasonlóan a Ha C időszak emléke az a díszes tűvég (4. kép 3), amely a hegy nyugati bazaltplatóján került elő, és aminek párhuzamai a korai szórványok, illetve a somlónásárhelyi 1. halomsír leletei között is felismerhetők. A poncolásokkal díszített, áttört, félkör alakú lemez (4. kép 6) jelentősége abban érhető tetten, hogy párhuzamai a Dunántúlon csak a kisravazdi kincsleletben találhatók meg. Ez utóbbi tárgyak utalnak annak az elitnek a jelenlétére a hegytetőn, amelyet eddig a környéken feltárt halomsírokból lehetett megismerni. Az újonnan előkerült szórványok között népes csoportot alkotnak a fibulák, melyek között több ívfibulát is azonosítani lehet (4. kép 7–9). A fibulatípus használatát a Ha C2 időszaktól a késő Hallstatt időszakokig (Ha D2–D3) lehet követni.

Az eddig lezajlott terepi kutatások egyik fontos felfedezése, hogy az utóbb említett korszakok leletanyaga is azonosítható a Somló-hegyen. Karakteres tárgytípus képvisel az előkerült háromszárnyú, belsőköpűs bronz nyílhegy (5. kép 2), amely a Ha D2 időszakra keltezhető. Ugyancsak „keleti” eredetű tárgytípusként azonosítható a hegyen előkerült leletanyagban az a két nemesfém bevonattal ellátott spirálkarika (5. kép 1, 3), amelyek a Vekerzug-kultúra egyik legjellegzetesebb típusához köthetők a Kr. e. 6. század elejétől. Ugyan keltezésük csak tág határok között lehetséges, a Dunántúlon elsősorban a késő Hallstatt-kori települések (Sopron-Krautacker, Sé-Doberdó, Alsópáhok-Hévízdomb) leletanyagából ismertek.

A somlói 4. depót 2023. július 2-án találta Dékán Péter, a Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum Közösségi Régészeti Programjának önkéntese a Péterváry Tamás által vezetett fémkereső-műszeres lelőhely-felderítés során. Miután az előkerült két sarlórol *in situ* fotók készültek (6. kép), az egyik sarlót (a katalógusban 2. tétel) (7. kép 2) vélelmezett rossz állapota miatt kiemeltük, a másikat eredeti helyzetében hagytuk. A sarlók fölül kitermelt föld átnézése során került elő a velemi típusú bronzfibula (a katalógusban 1. tétel) (7. kép 1).

A 4. depó feltárására másnap, július 3-án került sor. A leletgyűjtést minden bizonnyal településen belül

ásták el, mert a tárgyak körül nyitott szondában nagy mennyiségű kerámiatöredéket és számos állatcsontot találtunk. A leletanyag nagy mennyisége és sűrűsége miatt arra jutottunk, hogy a tárgyak körül nyitott kis méretű szonda nem teszi lehetővé a depó kontextusának pontos dokumentálását, a tárgyak pozíciójának dokumentálására és a kontextus minél kisebb mértékű bolygatására törekedtünk. A 4. depó kontextusát geofizikai felmérések és nagyobb felületű ásatás keretein belül fogjuk tisztázni. A július 3-i feltárás során a két vassarlón és a velemi típusú fibulán kívül csupán egy késő bronzkori sarlópenge-töredéket találtunk a két vassarlótól megközelítőleg 40 cm-re, ennek összefüggése a 4. depóval ugyanakkor nem valószínű.

A két vassarló közül az egyik (a katalógusban 2. tétel) (7. kép 2) Studeníková tipológiai rendszere alapján a II típushoz, a katalógusban 3. számmal jelölt sarló (7. kép 3) a V típushoz köthető. Bár a sarlók keltezése csak tág határok között lehetséges, párhuzamaik alapján elsősorban a Ha D időszak jöhet szóba keltezként. A velemi típusú fibula azon-

ban a Ha D2–D3 időszakokat jelöli ki a 4. depó kronológiai kereteként.

A 4. depót alkotó tárgyak mind használtak. A sarlókon csorbulások és kalapálások nyomai utalnak arra, hogy az eszközöket primer funkciójuknak megfelelően használhatták, illetve karban is tartották őket. Hasonló módon, a velemi típusú fibulán is felismerhetők azok a kopásnyomok, amelyek a viseleti elem használatát bizonyítják.

A somlói 4. depó az első vaseszközöket is tartalmazó Hallstatt-kori kincslelet a Dunántúlon, aminek legpontosabb párhuzamai elsősorban a Kárpát-medence északi régióiból ismertek, például Smolenice-Molpír és a dédestapolcsányi Verebce-bérc erődített településeiről. Azonban míg a smolenicei erődítés esetében a kincsleletek értelmezését jellemzően összekötik a települést elpusztító ostrommal, hasonló eseményre utaló nyomok a somlói magaslati településről nem ismertek. A somlói 4. depó pontosabb értelmezése a leletegyüttes tágabb kontextusának megismerése nélkül nem lehetséges.

