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A NEW IRON AGE SETTLEMENT AT TÖTTÖS, SOUTHWESTERN HUNGARY: PRELIMINARY REPORT

Mira MAJDÁN¹ 

A new Iron Age settlement was discovered during the excavations of the final 12 km section of motorway M6, connecting Budapest with the Croatian border, in 2021. The settlement lies on the two banks of a small creek and, thus, was documented under two separate names: Töttös-Alsó-megye-dűlő and Töttös-Mikes-dűlő. During the excavation, over forty Iron Age features were identified, with a material consisting mostly of pottery finds, animal bones, stones, and a minimal amount of metal items. Most features were pits, but some may be interpreted as buildings. The analysis of the find material concluded that the site was in continuous use from at least the Ha D to the LT B period, which means it seamlessly transitioned into the new cultural milieu of the Late Iron Age.

Egy új vaskori település került napvilágra 2021-ben a M6 autópálya Budapestet a horvát határral összekötő utolsó 12 km-es szakaszának feltárási munkálatai alatt. A település egy vízfolyás két partján fekszik, ezért két különböző lelőhelyként került dokumentálásra, mint Töttös-Alsó-megye dűlő és Töttös-Mikes-dűlő. A feltárás során több, mint 40 vaskori objektumot azonosítottunk, leletanyaguk elsősorban kerámiából, állatcsontból, kőből és elenyésző mennyiségű fémből állt. A legtöbb objektum gödör volt, de néhányat épületként is értelmezhetünk. A leletanyag előzetes vizsgálata alapján a település a Ha D időszaktól a LT B időszakig folyamatosan használatban volt, vagyis fennakadás nélkül ment át a késői vaskorba.

Keywords: Late Hallstatt period, Early La Tène period, transition, Iron Age settlement, geometric decoration, stamped pottery

Kulcsszavak: késő Hallstatt, kora La Tène, átmenet, vaskori település, geometrikus díszítés, bepecsételt kerámia

Introduction

Research on the Early Iron Age in southwestern Hungary has been in a somewhat disadvantaged position. The repeated reference to elevated and/or fortified settlements from the earlier Hallstatt period has become a routine assertion lacking substance, as even these so-called ‘centres of power’ remain poorly researched – or more precisely, their findings have scarcely been published.¹ Mostly burial sites have been documented from the later phases, and very little is to be known in general about Late Hallstatt lowland settlements, settlement networks, and settlement structures.

One exception is a settlement at Szajk, excavated in connection with a previous construction phase of motorway M6 in 2005–2007; the results have been presented in several publications since (Gábor 2008;

Gáti 2008; Lóki 2008; Gáti 2014 etc.). This site is an important parallel in many respects to the new material from Töttös.

First, both the Töttös and Szajk sites lay in the same micro-region in the eastern part of Baranya County and have a very similar geographical environment. The two sites are merely ten kilometres away (Fig. 1), suggesting that the conspicuous absence of Early Iron Age lowland settlements in Baranya County is likely the result of a lack of archaeological research in the region rather than anything else.

The other significance of the Szajk site lies in the find material itself, which shows close similarity to the record of Töttös, representing an immense help in its dating.²

The research results of Szajk have revealed a continuous settlement development from the Late Hallstatt to the Early La Tène period. This more or

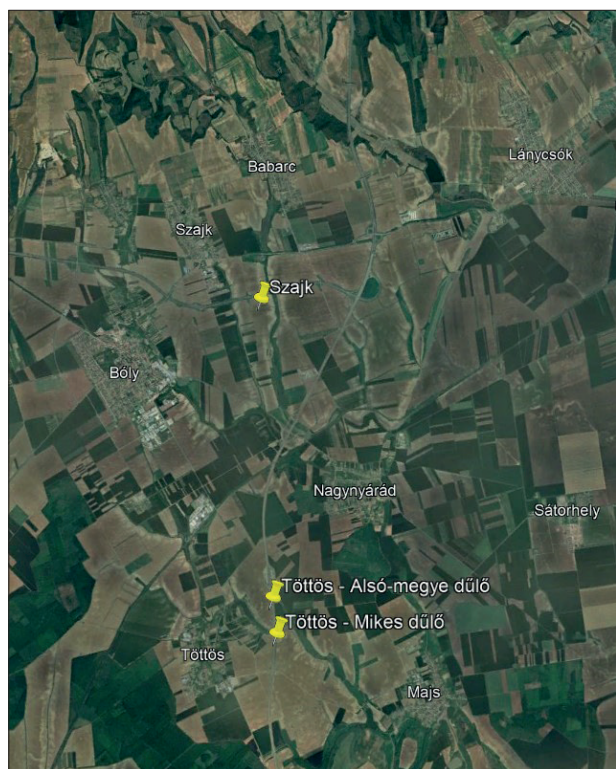


Fig. 1. Position of sites mentioned in the text
in Baranya County

1. kép. A szövegben említett baranyai lelőhelyek
elhelyezkedése

less corroborates the idea of the arrival of La Tène influences in southern Transdanubia and shows that the start of the La Tène trend in this region is somewhat delayed compared to the northern parts of the Carpathian Basin. A similar situation could be seen in the neighbouring territory of northeast Croatia, where the new trends arrived but Early Iron Age traditions also survived up until the 3rd century BC (Dizdar, Potrebica 2002, 89).

The settlement

As mentioned above, the new Iron Age settlement at Töttös lies on the opposite banks of a creek – hence the two names, Töttös-Alsó-megye-dűlő for the northern, and Töttös-Mikes-dűlő for the southern part. The 6.8 ha area excavated between February and June 2021 yielded over 800 features,³ most of which (around 600) could be assigned to the Late Neolithic/Early Copper Age Lengyel Culture, a few to the Middle Bronze Age Encrusted Pottery Culture, some to the Árpád Age, and 42 to the Iron Age. The number of Iron Age features and the material found in them is relatively numerous; the processing

of this record is still in progress. Accordingly, the aim of this paper is to present only the most characteristic features and finds from the settlement. Hopefully, the rest will be published in more detail soon.

Regarding the layout of the site, it has become clear already in the excavation that all Iron Age features were concentrated closer to the banks of the creek than, for example, the ones of the Lengyel Culture. It has also become obvious immediately that a significant part of the settlement remained unearthen – a frequent situation in development-led excavations. This arrangement – the settlement stretching on both sides of a creek, with sometimes hundreds of metres between the parts – is a common characteristic of lowland settlements; see, for example, Szajk, Alsópáhok-Hévízdomb, and Ménfőcsanak.

Based on the position of the Iron Age features, the layout of the Töttös site is also similar to other (partially) excavated Hallstatt lowland settlements. It seems a scattered structure was preferred in this period, with ‘households’ relatively far from each other (Đurković 2016, 113–114).

The larger, northern part of the Töttös site lies at 111–126 m a.B.s.l. and covers 5 hectares with (so far) thirty identified Iron Age features.

Some Iron Age features were irregular, 30–140 cm deep pits, likely clay extraction pits that have gradually filled up with waste later.

Most of the remaining pits were fairly deep (80–190 cm), ‘beehive-’ or pear-shaped, likely storage constructions. They usually had a relatively narrow mouth (130–255 cm in diameter) and a wider bottom (160–265 cm) (Fig. 11). Their walls and bottoms were smoothed and coated with a thick clay plaster layer, probably to prolong the shelf-life of the stored goods and make it more difficult for rodents to gain access. The food was probably placed into them in organic or pottery containers.

The remaining, relatively shallow (45–140 cm deep), features can be interpreted as buildings. They were more or less rectangular, with 270–730 and 385–480 cm long sides, respectively. Some included possible postholes (Fig. 11). Originally, Features 92, 304, 440, and 479 could have had clay-plastered floors.

One of the supposed buildings, Feature 497 included the remains of a possible fireplace in an oval depression (Fig. 11). While no postholes could be identified in or around this feature, it could indeed be a building.

The 1.8 ha southern part of the site lay on a steeper hillside at 111–129 m a.B.s.l. Altogether twelve Iron



Fig. 2. AMD Feature 497 with the debris of the supposed fireplace
2. kép. A 497. objektum a feltételezett tűzhely omladékával

Age features have been identified there, suggesting that this settlement part was smaller than the one on the other bank. Save for a ditch (Feature 88) and a possible building (Feature 38), all features were pits; they were generally shallower in this bank than on the other, their depth ranging from 45–145 cm.

Feature 38 was rounded rectangular, with a possible posthole at the centre (Fig. 12). It had traces of a plastered floor, and its northern part was connected to the previously mentioned ditch.

The northern and southern extents of the Iron Age settlement could be determined from the thinning out of features. Unfortunately, we have no information about its eastern and western extents – it certainly reached over the path of the motorway in both directions. In lack of a completely unearthed Hallstatt settlement in Transdanubia, one can only guess the original number of households and inhabitants.

When analysing the material of the Iron Age features, one must also keep in mind that the site was inhabited, even if not continuously, for literally several thousands of years. There is always a chance that the find material became mixed, and it is highly probable that Iron Age people disturbed some

Lengyel Culture or Middle Bronze Age features while digging the pits and houses of their settlement, and reused or relocated some potsherds and other objects they found there. For example, several stone tools found in the Iron Age features were probably gathered from Lengyel Culture features. The same could happen during the establishing of the Árpád Age village: the builders likely disturbed Iron Age features, destroying important elements of the previous settlement. At least one feature at Mikes-dűlő site contained both wheel-thrown medieval pottery and typical Iron Age potsherds.

The find material

The sites yielded more-or-less common Iron Age settlement material with large quantities of animal bone and pottery fragments. Other types of ceramic objects were also uncovered; the rarest finds were bone tools and metal items. Unfortunately, it is quite difficult to determine at this point of research whether the numerous stone tools belong to the Lengyel Culture or the Iron Age horizon of the site; they were possibly made in the former and reused in the latter.

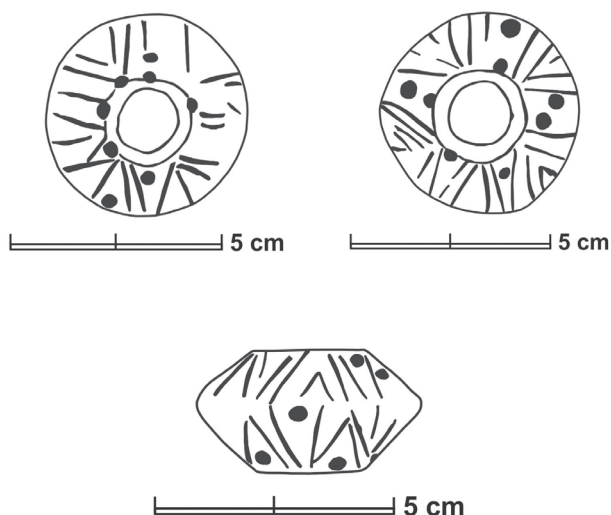


Fig. 3. Point and line patterns on the spindle whorl from AMD Feature 92

3. kép. Pontokból és vonalakkból álló díszítés a 92. objektumban talált orsógombon

In the following, the Alsó-megye site is referred to as AMD and the Mikes-dűlő site as MD because some feature numbers occur in both.

Household objects

As usual in settlements, evidence of textile making was retrieved from several features. Common artefacts of the period include pottery spindle whorls, eight of which have been uncovered in the two sites. They were either flat, biconical, or conical, some with channelling on the sides and one with deep incisions on the mostly flat bottom side (Fig. 13).

One of the biconical pieces is decorated with a combination of round depressions and incised lines (Fig. 3). Similar decorated spindle whorls are also relatively common in the material of several Early Iron Age settlements (including, for example, Jánosháza, Loretto, Leopoldsberg, Sopron-Krautacker) and graves (Százhalombatta).

Spindle whorls were found both in pits and probable buildings (AMD Features 92, 304, 305, and 497). The chunkier biconical types were probably used for heavier, thicker yarns, while the more delicate, conical types could have been used for finer yarns common in the Hallstatt period (Grömer 2016, 86–87).

Pyramidal loom weights are another object type associated with textile making; they are present in the archaeological record of the Carpathian Basin from the Late Bronze Age, so the appearance of some in the Töttös settlement came as no surprise (Fig. 13. 12). Another type of weight – a conical piece



Fig. 4. A kantharos with several holes possibly drilled for repair

4. kép. Talán javítás céljából több helyen átyukasztott kantharos



Fig. 5. 'Dacian' cup
5. kép. „Dák” csésze



Fig. 6. Meander motif on a large urn
6. kép. Meander motívum egy nagyméretű urnán

with a round vertical hole (Fig. 13. 13) – came from AMD Feature 304.

Some truly gigantic red conical pottery weights with horizontal holes were recovered from AMD Features 488, 490, and 580, all storage pits. Two of these weigh around 5 kilograms each (Fig. 3. 9–10). Since all of them were found in beehive-shaped pits, they likely had a role connected with this specific storage unit type.



Fig. 7. Embossed cup fragment
7. kép. Domborított díszű csésze töredéke

Pottery

The pottery record of the site has some very characteristic traits. It comprises both domestic pottery and high-quality ‘decorative’ pieces found in the same features. The vessels were made of clay tempered with sand, fine gravel and diverse-grade grog. The vessels were mostly hand-shaped, except for some wheel-thrown and slow-wheeled pieces. Traces of repairing – small holes drilled next to the broken edges – were observed on several vessels (Fig. 14. 5–9), the most obvious example being a shiny black *kantharos* from AMD Feature 363, which could be reconstructed almost completely. It bears some smoothed triangle patterns around the widest part, under the handles, as well as twelve holes drilled in the body of the vessel (Fig. 4), all along the edges where it broke into several pieces, which associates them with the original ‘restoration’ of the vessel. Some kind of twine, string, or possibly a metal wire could be woven through these holes to hold the parts of the *kantharos* together. As this vessel is one of the better-quality pieces, with a carefully finished surface and decoration, it was probably worth the original owner enough to be subjected to extensive reparation.

Common pottery forms

Pots. The most common pot form has a rounded body with a slightly conical wall, a gently inverted, flat rim, and a flat base (Fig. 14. 1). This type is common in later Hallstatt settlements and graves, as was aptly summarised by S. Kovačević in the publication of Zbelava in Croatia (Kovačević 2008, 62).

Another frequent type is large pots or urns with conical necks (*Kegelhalsgefäße*), flat bases, and sometimes vertical channelling on the shoulder (Fig. 14. 2–3). It originates from the pottery tradition of the Late Bronze Age Urnfield Culture and is present in the Hallstatt material culture from the beginning. Characteristic specimens are known from the Iron Age of southern Transdanubia from the 8th century BC onward (Maráz 1996, 260). The type is one of the ‘old’ ones, disappearing almost completely after the Ha D phase.

Smaller pots with round bodies, reverted rims, and flat bases are also present in the find material. One has a small horizontal knob handle with a possible suspension hole (Fig. 14. 4). Pierced horizontal knob handles are characteristic of the Late Urnfield Culture and, to a lesser extent, the Early Iron Age (Vadász 1992, 218).

Bowls and plates. The most common bowl type at Töttös was a relatively shallow variant with an inverted rim. The rim of many bears oblique channelling, and the base of some is omphalic; both solutions are characteristic of Early Iron Age pottery (Fig. 15. 1–4). Their decoration is discussed below. Usually deep S-profile bowls are also present in the material; some were wheel-thrown, and thus can generally be dated to either the transition of the Ha D2/LT A phases or the later La Tène period.

Cups/mugs. One-handled cups with omphalic bases are amongst the most characteristic Hallstatt period finds and the most numerous in the pottery record of Töttös. An intact piece and a fragment were discovered in AMD Feature 488. The inside of these cups is always black burnished (Fig. 15. 5–8).

The only cup with a horned handle came from AMD Feature 446 (Fig. 16. 1). This type is common in both Hallstatt and Scythian contexts; specimens were also found at Szajk. The fragment in question could be classified as K. Tankó’s Type B (Tankó 2005, 154). Some single handle fragments can be associated with certain characteristic Hallstatt-style cups or mugs; for example, handles with a flat disc (Fig. 16. 3)



Fig. 8. Animal bones deposited in the top part of the fill of AMD Feature 305

8. kép. Állatcsontok a 305. objektum betöltésének tetején

belong to a local, southern Transdanubian variant, which also appears in the pottery record of Szajk (Gáti 2014, 121).

As mentioned above, the well-known Illyrian/Pannonian *kantharoi* are also present in the material: an almost complete, repaired specimen from AMD Feature 363 and some fragments, many of which includes the start of the two handles on the rim. Besides, some separate, elongated, ribbon-like handles could also belong to *kantharoi*.

A rather unusual cup was recovered from MD Feature 41. It has a truncated conical body, a narrow bottom, a wide mouth, and a flat base. A thick, rather rough, round-profiled handle, under which the vessel bears a small, presumably decorative knob, connects the rim and the bottom (Fig. 5). This cup represents a possibly non-local type. Two similar, coarsely made specimens from the Szentlőrinc cemetery were interpreted as ladles (Jerem 1968, 188). As usual for Iron Age cups, both have round bottoms, so their resemblance to the cup from Töttös is not strong. The closest analogies to the Töttös spec-

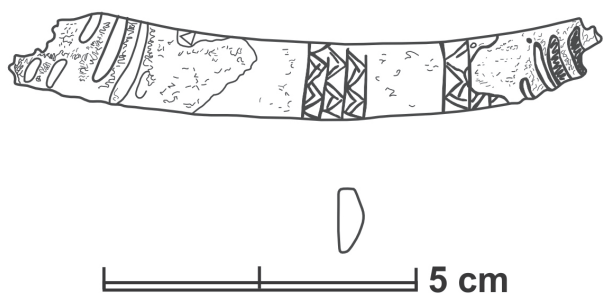


Fig. 9. Polished bone object with geometric decoration

9. kép. Csiszolt és geometrikus dísszel ellátott csonttárgy

imen are known from the Great Hungarian Plain and Transylvania, and are generally believed to be of Dacian origin (Rudnicki 2014, 470). This object type in the record of Töttös is younger than most, being not older than the 2nd century BC, corresponding to the end of the middle LT period. Some 'Dacian-type' finds in the territory of modern-day Hungary were dated even younger, their appearance having been connected with an increasing Dacian influence and activity in the Carpathian Basin during the reign of Burebista (Visy 1970, 19). If the specimen from MD Feature 41 is really connected to these 'Dacian-type' cups, that would raise several questions about the chronology and connections of the site.

Situlae. Fragments of likely wheel-thrown pots made of graphite-tempered clay, with rounded bodies, bulging rims, and usually vertical brushing on the belly were classified into this special category. The type was also observed in Szajk, although those specimens had no graphite in their material. Graphitic *situlae* were fairly common in the later phases of the Iron Age; the type was present in the Carpathian Basin from the beginning of the La Tène Period, and probably arrived in southern Transdanubia in the later LT B phase (Gáti 2008, 54). The brushing on the belly was interpreted as a later development that only appeared from the LT C phase (Jerem et al. 1985, 8); however, this theory has been disproved in the last decades and now it is generally agreed that the brushing was already present in the LT B2 phase at the latest (Tankó, Egry 2009, 399).

Lids. Some large handles probably belonged to lids; this hypothesis is corroborated by a mostly intact piece of this relatively common Iron Age utensil (Fig. 16. 2). Such items are usually interpreted either as baking lids or ember covers, appearing in numerous Early Iron Age settlements, such as Balatonboglár-Berekre-dűlő, Sopron-Krautacker, the Poštela hillfort, Virovitica-Đurađ East, Zbelava, etc.

Decoration

A wide array of decorations appears on the pottery from Töttös. Some were only applied to coarse household types, while others were seemingly reserved for prestigious higher-quality pieces. The applied decoration is comprised of the most rudimentary solutions: a *horizontal rib* divided by a row of more-or-less uniform finger imprints, usually appearing on the upper or lower part of pots (Fig. 17. 1–3, 16–18)

and a row of short vertical impressions, typically on the shoulder or rim of large vessels, such as pots or urns (Fig. 17. 7, 14, 19). Both are typical to relatively thick-walled, coarse domestic pottery.

Channelling is more frequent on thin-walled high-quality vessels, as it had been in the Carpathian Basin since the Late Bronze Age. A typical Hallstatt pottery, the material of Töttös includes a wide variety of patterns made using this technique (Fig. 17. 4–5, 8–10).



Fig. 10. Graphite nuggets from AMD Feature 363
10. kép. Grafitrögök a 363. objektumból

Fragments of vessels with horizontal channelling on their shoulders were recovered from several features (Fig. 14. 2–3). These reflect archaic Bronze Age traditions; the solution was frequent in the Urnfield and Gáva cultures. Channelling is regarded as a relatively old decoration technique (Metzner-Nebelsick 2002, 97).

The *burnished geometric patterns* appearing on several fine pottery fragments are somewhat more unique. Four pattern types could be distinguished: the first is comprised of shallow, short parallel lines forming a triangle (Fig. 18. 1–2), usually on the shoulder; this decoration has a delicate, smoothed overall impression. Fragments with such patterns came from MD Feature 41 and AMD Feature 363. This type of decoration is fairly common on Hallstatt Period vessels, mostly ones with black burnished surfaces, including ones from Sotin, Goričan, Virovitica, Malleiten, and Süttő. It is not exclusive to a single type but appears only on fine, thin-walled vessels.

Hatched triangles, a fairly frequent pattern in the Hallstatt Period, appear on numerous fragments (Fig. 18. 3–5). This type of decoration can be found

on almost any pottery type and is typical of the Hallstatt C phase (Gáti 2008, 50).

Another kind of geometric decoration was found on a single fragment from AMD Feature 365. The more-or-less regular net pattern was incised into the inner surface of a dark fragment, probably of a bowl. The motif set of graphite painting includes net patterns, but another incised example has yet to be discovered.

Maybe the most interesting channelled pattern is a meander, a motif relatively common on Hallstatt Period objects. In most cases, meanders were painted on the surface of the vessels rather than incised or channelled into it; see, for example, the specimens from Süttő (Kemenczei 1977, 81), Nagyberki-Szalacska (M. Kabay 1960, 57), and Martijanec (Matijaško 2014, 169). An almost complete meander band was restored on the large urn from MD Feature 50. The band runs around the bottom of the conical neck. The lines are not uniform, deeper than the ones of the 'burnished' triangles, made most certainly free-hand (Fig. 18. 7–8). The popularity of the meander motif peaked in the late Ha C and Ha D1 periods. Usually, it was applied to funerary goods or prestige objects, thus its presence on a domestic pottery vessel is somewhat surprising.

Several types of *graphite decoration* can be observed on the potsherds, mostly bowls. The whole surface of many was simply coated in graphitic paint to make it shiny; the thin layer wore off many in spots, exposing the original surface. In one case, a fragment with stamped circle decoration from AMD Feature 410, it remains a question whether the graphitic substance is slip or paint – as it is pointed out in the following, the two techniques indicate different pottery traditions.

In other cases, graphitic paint was used to draw patterns on the vessels. As it emerges from the record of several sites (Romsauer 1996, 438), graphite painting was also common in Late Hallstatt pottery. The less intricate variants include wide bands, mostly in simple geometric patterns of triangles or crosses, while the most frequent and more elaborate version was a delicate net pattern (mentioned above) covering both sides of the vessels, mostly shallow bowls with inverted rims (Fig. 19. 1–7). This pattern is relatively common in the Hallstatt material, appearing somewhat later than the wide painted graphite bands (Jáky 2015, 155).

A cup from MD Feature 38 has an odd combination of surface coating and net pattern. The surface

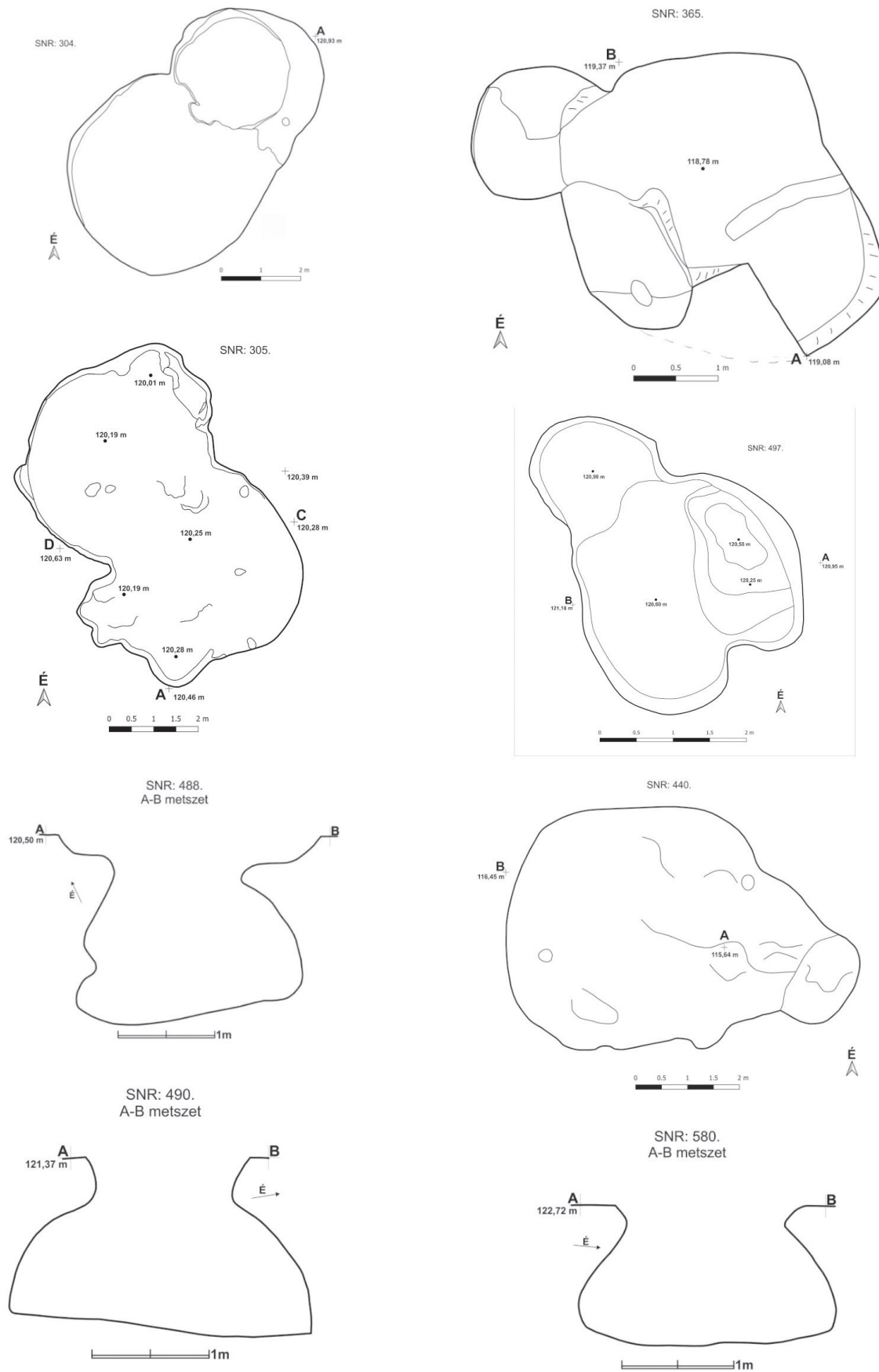


Fig. 11. Surface and profile surveys of features from Alsó-megye-dűlő
11. kép. Felszín- és metszetrajzok az Alsó-megye-dűlőből

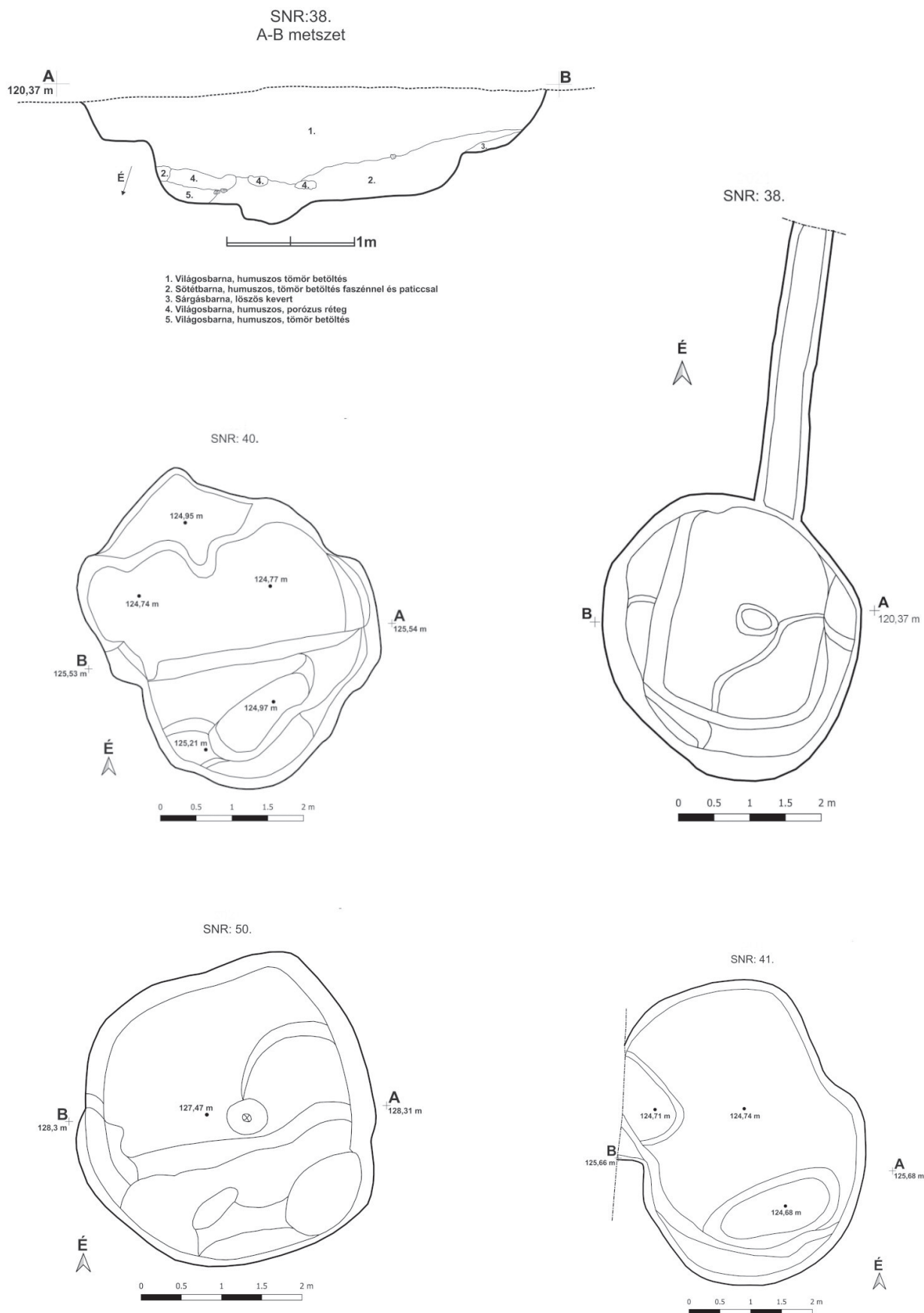


Fig. 12. Surface and profile surveys of features from Mikes-dűlő
12. kép. Felszín- és metszetrajzok a Mikes-dűlőből



Fig. 13. Household items
13. kép. Háztáji használati tárgyak

was treated rather nonchalantly: the lines of the net pattern are uneven and look unfinished, although the vessel itself is a fairly well-made, thin-walled piece, probably a *kantharos* (Fig. 19. 8–9). Decorating the outer side of the bottom of vessels with a net pattern was uncommon in the Iron Age; the piece has only a single analogue from the Scythian settlement at Rákospalota-Újmajör (Tézer 2011, 106, Fig. 16)⁴ and another from the settlement at Szajk (Gáti 2009, 66).

Some fragments were adorned with *stamped dec-*

oration; such pieces have been retrieved from AMD Features 92, 365, and MD Feature 41. Stamped vessels first appeared in the northwest Carpathian Basin in the LT A period⁵ and gradually spread towards the east and south alongside with La Tène traditions. Based on analogues from Romania, circle patterns could have been stamped with simple bone tools (Rustoiu 2014, 176). The popularity of stamped decoration seems to have varied by community in the Carpathian Basin (Rustoiu 2014, 174); unfortu-



1



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Fig. 14. Pottery forms
14. kép. Edény típusok



Fig. 15. Bowls and cups
15. kép. Tálak és csészék



Fig. 16. Handles
16. kép. Fülek

nately, the material available from southern Transdanubia is not enough to draw similar conclusions. Two pieces from Töttös bear a simple row of single circles each (Fig. 20. 1–2), one has a double row of concentric circles (Fig. 20. 3), and two display more complex patterns.

The neck fragment of a large pot or urn was decorated, under a pair of horizontal ribs, with a V-like

pattern of incised straight lines and stamped circles and a sun motif in the middle (Fig. 20. 5). Both the pattern and its position are somewhat unusual with no close parallels, as usually, stamped patterns appear under the shoulder or on the belly, only rarely on the neck of vessels.

A thin-walled, grey pottery fragment bears two horizontal channels with a pattern of intertwined



Fig. 17. Decorations (1)
17. kép. Díszítések (1)

semicircular arch rows with three circles at their junctions (Fig. 20. 4). The combination of semicircles and circles is common on early La Tène vessels, especially pitchers and flasks. Due to the almost complete lack of metal finds from Töttös, one can only assume that this decoration arrived in the region in the LT B1/B2 or LT C1 phase at the earliest, similar to the neighbouring Szajk (Gáti 2014, 123) or Zvonimirovo in Croatia (Dizdar 2011, 76).

Finally, other surface treatments enhancing the aesthetic of the vessels must be mentioned. Decorative pottery with *burnished black surface* (also called high-polished), including *bucchero* ware, is typical of the Early Iron Age; it was probably imitating metal vessels.

According to the evidence of an almost intact high-quality cup from MD Feature 50 (Fig. 7) *embossing* is also present in the fine pottery of the site. Based on Croatian and Slovenian sites (Kovačević 2008, 66), this technique probably has connections to the West.

Miscellaneous pottery finds

Numerous pottery finds with an unclear function, which were neither vessels nor household items, were also discovered on the site.

The irregular, flat ceramic object from AMD Feature 305 falls under the umbrella term *Tonsymbolen* ('clay symbols'). It has five small extensions and at least two more that partially or fully broke off (Fig. 21. 1). Unfortunately, it is incomplete, which renders it difficult to tell exactly how many extensions it had originally. This object represents a more archaic tradition: similar items were more frequent in the final Bronze Age and the very first stages of the Iron Age. Certain *Tonsymbolen* also appear in later Iron Age contexts, but their forms are quite different. Based on the parallels of the so-called hand/paw- or leaf-shaped 'symbols', which bear the closest resemblance to the piece uncovered at Töttös, these can be dated to the Late Bronze Age Urnfield and the older Hallstatt cultures, corresponding to the 10th–8th century BC.

The object from Töttös is most similar to the ones uncovered in graves at Békásmegyer, especially the piece from Grave 400. Further parallels are known from settlements, for example, at Adony, Batina (Kiskőszeg), Lengyel, and Sághegy, though most of these are stray finds. As the original shape of the object remains unclear, it cannot be identified with certainty as '*Handförmig*' ('hand-shaped') or '*Blattförmig*' ('leaf-shaped') as C. Metzner-Nebel-

sick did with the pieces mentioned above (Metzner-Nebelsick 1997). The function of these *Tonsymbolen* is not obvious; they are most commonly interpreted as cult objects, sometimes as astral symbols, with an apotropaic function assumed of hand- or paw-shaped pieces. The specimens found in settlements have raised the possibility of interpreting their find contexts as cult spaces (Metzner-Nebelsick 1997, 595). This may also hold for the settlement at Töttös, especially the Alsó-megye-dűlő, where this 'cult object' and a deliberately placed partial animal skeleton were found together in Feature 305.

The supposed religious aspect of the site may be further corroborated by some strange pottery objects from AMD Feature 304. The two pieces do not belong together, indicating that at least two such objects were in use at the site. Both were made of clay tempered with lots of organic material and fired to a reddish-brown colour. They have a flat surface and the remains of one or more legs on the opposite side. The flat surface was smoothed with great care, but the other parts were given less attention (Fig. 21. 3–4). It seems clear that they were supposed to stand on the legs and that the flat surface was used for something. This is why I am inclined to call these objects, in lack of a better word, 'altars';⁶ however, analogues have yet to be found. The closest parallels are probably 'oven models' in other Early Iron Age sites, usually associated with a fire cult or the sacral role of the hearth (Nebelsick 1996, 340).

There is perhaps even more evidence of ritual activities at the Alsó-megye-dűlő site, where three other very characteristic Hallstatt Culture objects were found. These 'firedogs' ('*Tonfeuerböcken*') or 'moon idols' ('*Mondidolen*') are frequent finds in Early Iron Age contexts, appearing in both graves and settlements. Though their function remains unclear, many interpretations include a ritual or sacred purpose (Nagy 1979, 65), while others emphasise the practical functions and possible domestic uses of these objects (Teržan 1996, 524) – there is no general consensus.

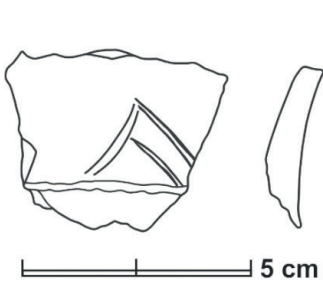
Based on its shape, the first object (from AMD Feature 313) is perhaps more rightly called a 'moon idol' than a 'firedog' (Fig. 21. 2). The surviving 17 × 10 cm fragment has traces of either secondary or very uneven firing. A quite pronounced channelling runs along the back of the item, ending in an up- and outward-curving animal protome, possibly some kind of bovid, whose snout is unfortunately missing. Only a single trapezoid leg with vertical channelling



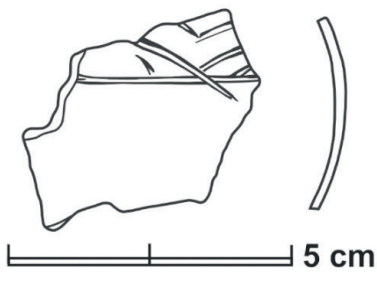
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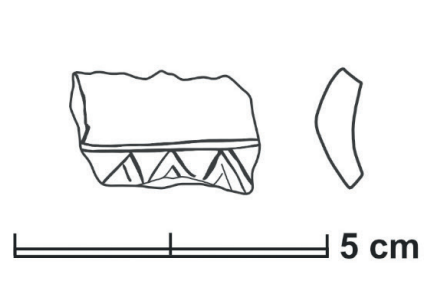
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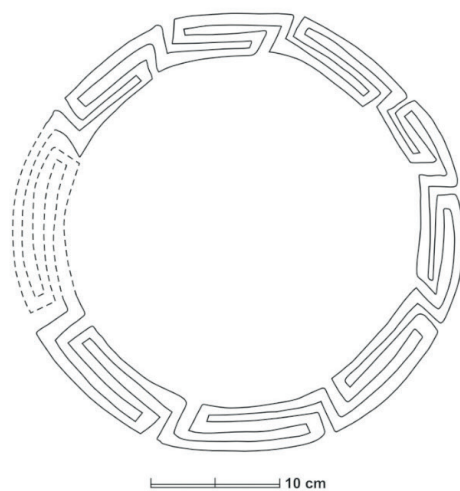
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Fig. 18. Decorations (2)
18. kép. Díszítések (2)

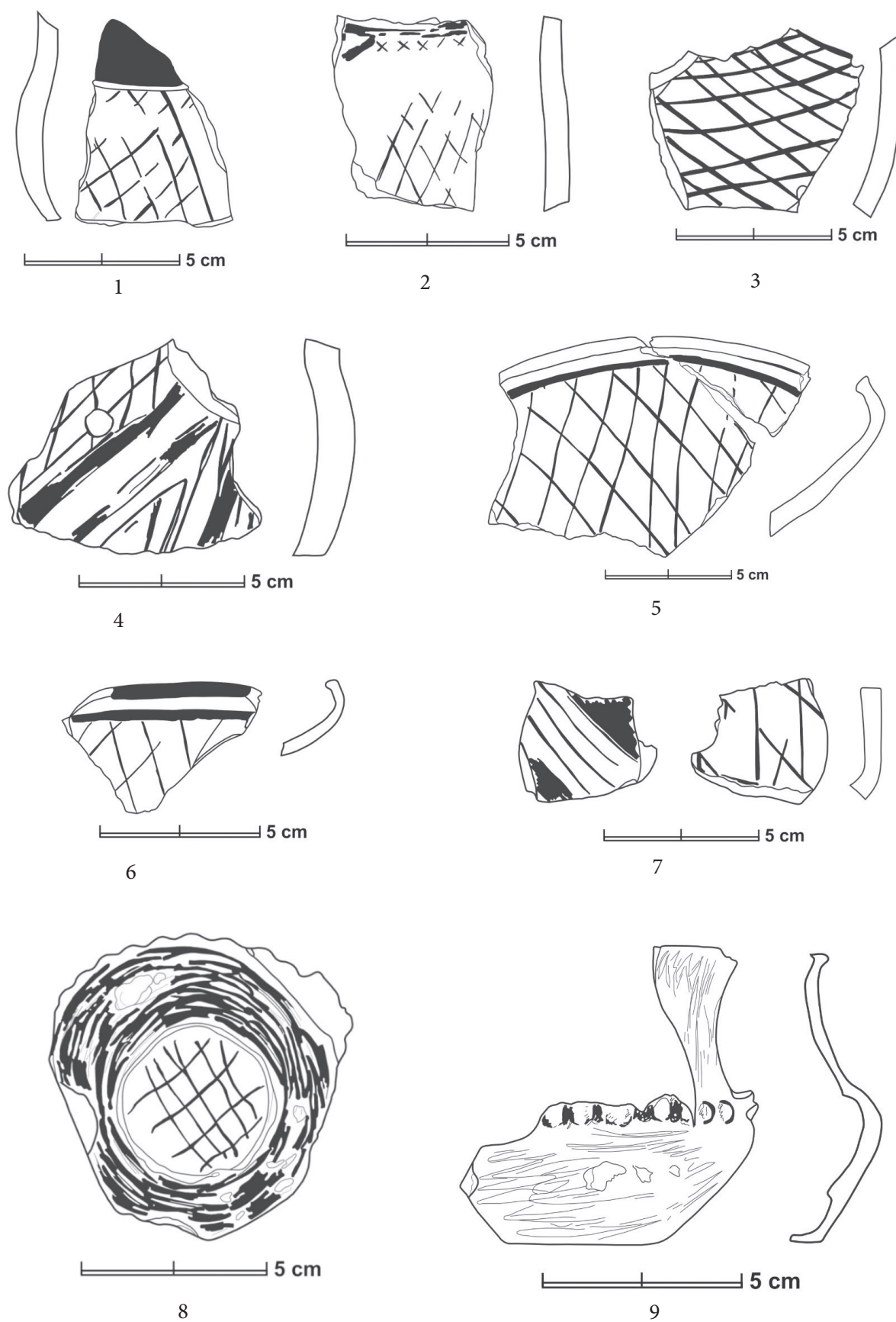


Fig. 19. Decorations (3)
19. kép. Díszítések (3)

has survived of the figurine. It meets the ground at an angle, suggesting, together with the fracture surface on the opposite side of the body, that originally, the animal stood on a pair of legs. Based on parallels, the curvature of the body, and the middle part of the fracture surface, the figurine clearly had at least one other pair of legs and ended in another animal protome, i.e. it was symmetrical. One of its closest analogues is known from Batina/Kiskőszeg (Nagy 1979, 27).

The second fragment, from AMD Feature 522, has a similar red surface but it was much more carefully smoothed. The surviving fragment is 12 cm high, 6.5 cm wide, and slightly thicker at its base (Fig. 21. 5). Its edges were enhanced with three parallel, finger-impressed ribs (a common decoration on firedogs), and had at least one hole in the middle part; the original number of holes cannot be determined from the fragment.

Surprisingly, a very similar fragment came to light in AMD Feature 531. With a smooth, red surface, three parallel finger-impressed ribs, and two holes in the middle part of the body, it could be mistaken for the previous firedog. However, the sizes of the fragments are pretty different (Fig. 21. 6): this one is only 10 cm long and 9 cm high, with a base even thicker than that of the previous one. Similar perforated firedogs are known from several Hallstatt sites, such as, for example, Szombathely-Reiszig dűlő, Bakonyszentkirály-Zöröghegy, and Velem. The piece from Töttös is most similar to one from an unknown location in the collection of the Hungarian National Museum (Nagy 1979, Tab. III). Relying only morsels of information, the chronological position of firedogs could only be determined hypothetically. There is sufficient evidence that the type was already present in the Carpathian Basin in the Late Bronze Age Urnfield Period and remained in use in the Hallstatt Culture. The youngest examples seem to belong to the older phase of the Hallstatt Culture, while after the Ha C period, occurrences are scarce, if existing at all.

All three firedogs had been broken prior to interment. Since we did not discover any other fragments of any of them in any feature of the site, they might have been destroyed deliberately.

Metal finds

Other objects of archaeological interest include a few pieces of metal. As it is common in Early Iron Age settlements, metal finds are rare at Töttös, too.

A fragment of a simple bronze wire neckring with loop ends was found in AMD Feature 305. This variant was rather common in Transdanubia from the Late Bronze Age (Fig. 22. 3). Nevertheless, it can help with determining the chronological position of the site, since it represents a rather archaic variant that more-or-less disappears after the Ha D period (Horváth 2015, 240).

A simple bent bronze wire needle with an eye was retrieved from MD Feature 77 (Fig. 22. 2). Similar tools have been found at settlements in Velem-Szent Vid (Fekete 1986, 61, Tab. 15. 1) and Celldömölk-Sághegy (Patek 1968); the type can be regarded as an archaic element from the previous Urnfield Culture.

Three small bronze fragments were found in AMD Feature 484. One of them could be the tip of a spear or a sword, while the other ones are too small to be identified (Fig. 22. 4).

A stray iron knife was found with metal detector in the vicinity of AMD Features 304 and 305 (Fig. 22. 1). Such knives, with a curved back and a tapered tang, are frequent finds across the entire Carpathian Basin from the Ha C to the LT B phase (Jerem 1968, 183–184; Szabó 2007, 257; Soós 2020, 82).

Bone, tusk, and horn artefacts

As expected in an Iron Age settlement, the features abounded with the bones of, based on a preliminary archaeozoological evaluation, mostly pigs, cattle, and small ruminants.

A special bone assemblage was uncovered in AMD Feature 305: the skull and the leg fragments probably belonged to cattle. During excavation, the bones were found in the top part of the pit's fill (Fig. 8). However, the related feature may possibly be a conglomerate of two distinct ones, as its southern part has some suspicious holes and resembles a rectangular building, while the northern part could have been either a separate feature, possibly dug later, or some kind of entryway to the building.

In either case, the position of the bones indicates intentional placement, which in turn would raise some questions about the function and circumstances of abandonment of the feature.

The site also yielded some animal bone artefacts. A polished bone tool with a broken tip and a hole through its wider end was uncovered in AMD Feature 479 (Fig. 22. 7), and a perforated wild boar tusk was found in AMD Feature 580 (Fig. 21. 6). The presence of boar tusks in an Iron Age context is not unprecedented – see, for example, the famous horse-

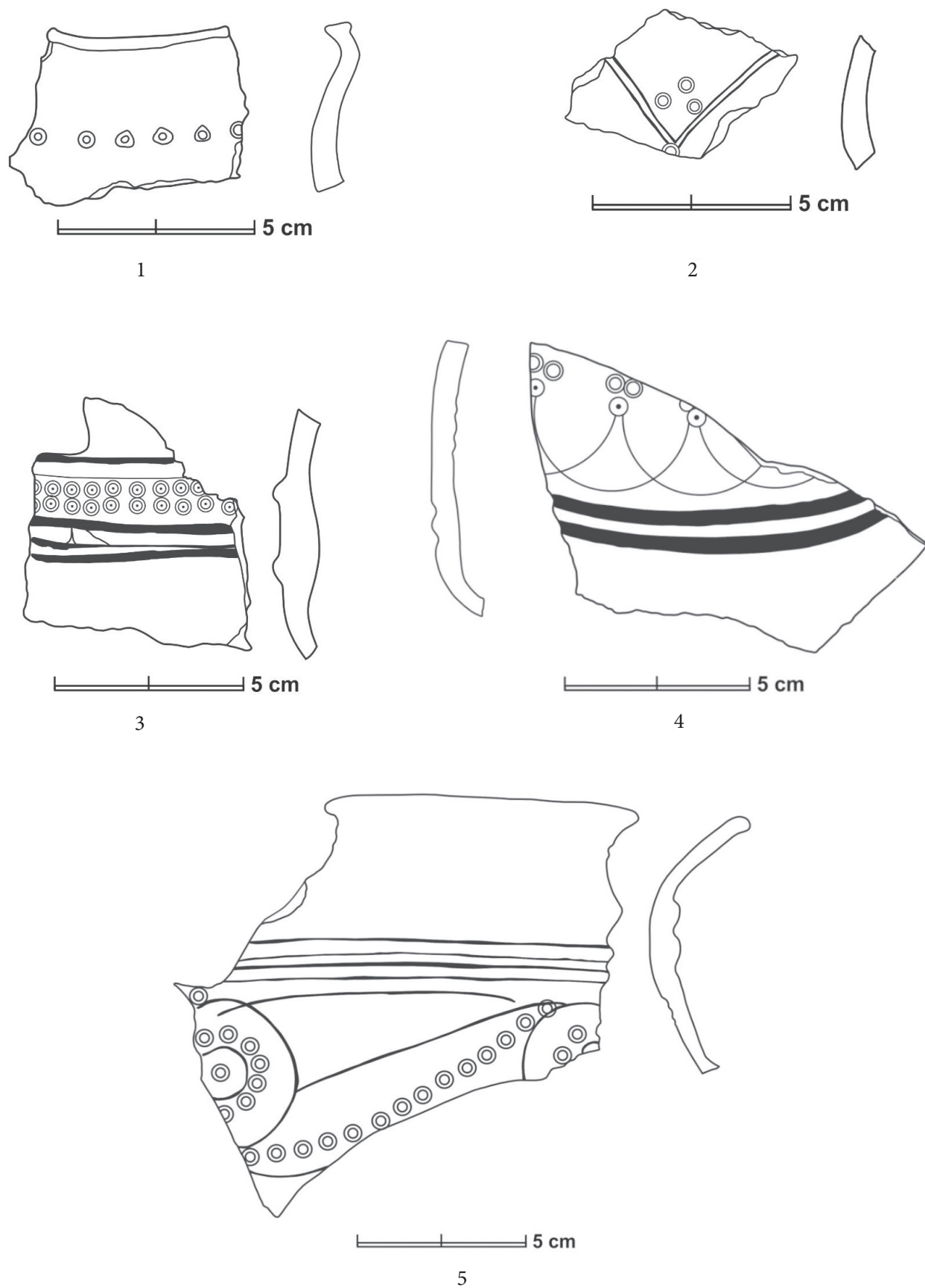


Fig. 20. Decorations (4)
20. kép. Díszítések (4)

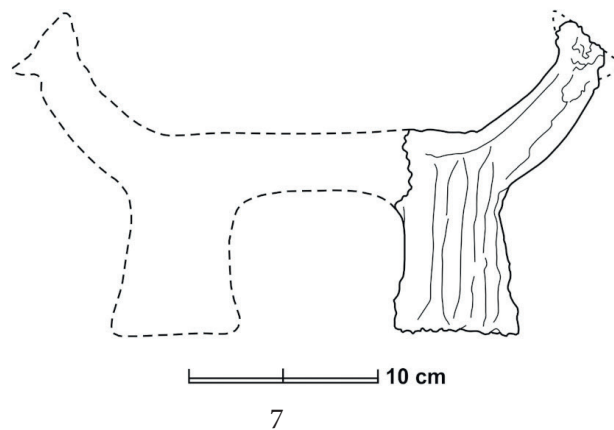


Fig. 21. Miscellaneous pottery finds
21. kép. Különféle kerámiatárgyak

bit from Százhalombatta (Herceg 1985, 63; Holport 1985, 28) – but the use of this material is considerably more typical of the Lengyel Culture, raising the possibility that this piece was only repurposed in the Iron Age.

One further bone find came from AMD Feature 365. The upper and lateral sides of the slightly curved bone, likely an animal rib, have carefully been polished, giving the object an almost triangular cross section, while the bottom face was left unworked (Fig. 22. 5). Ripples or waves with rows of incised geometric motifs between them have been deepened into the ends of the upper face (Fig. 9). The original dimensions of the object cannot be estimated, and there is no trace of any means of suspension or fastening, leaving its purpose in obscurity. Similar flat, decorated bone objects in Iron Age find materials are usually interpreted as tool handles (Gál, Molnár 2004, 201; Tecco Hvala 2012, 136), decorative plates of composite bows (Csallány 1964, 11) or small pouches (Patek 1990, 71), or bracers for small containers (Bóka 2012, 151).

Although decorated bone objects were fairly common in the Early Iron Age, no precise analogue to this artefact could be found. Similar items appear in the Hallstatt Culture in funerary contexts (e.g., Tumuli 117 and 118 at Százhalombatta (Holport 1986, 97) or the tumulus at Regöly-Strupka-Magyar birtok (Szabó, Fekete 2015, 12) and settlements like Alsópáhok-Hévízdomb (Horváth 2015, 242) and Sopron-Krautacker (Jerem et al. 1984, 154). Notably, most pieces are adorned with dot-circle motif combinations.

Small, decorated bone plates are also known from the Prescythian/Scythian record of the eastern Carpathian Basin; the triangle patterns on some are similar to the motifs on the piece from Töttös. Such a plate was found in a Prescythian grave at Szeged-Öthalom (Kemenczei 1989, 68), and numerous examples were uncovered, mainly in graves associated with the Mezőcsát Culture, in Heves County (Patek 1990, 70).⁷ The main differences lie in shape and size: the bone object from Töttös is neither as flat, nor as large as ones from Mezőcsát. Besides, its decoration also reflects inferior skills or less care.

Graphite

Like at Szajk, a number of graphite nuggets have been found at Töttös, too. AMD Feature 363 held 1–4 cm large irregular pieces and some iron slag (Fig. 10). The repaired *kantharos* was also found there. With

a 3.7 × 4 m floor area and possible postholes, this feature was one of the possible small houses; considering these finds, it could be some kind of workshop. The graphite nuggets are going to be subjected to provenance analysis to determine whether these, like the pieces found at Szajk (Havancsák et al. 2009, 12), may also arrived from Bohemia – a hypothesis formed in light of the well-documented connection between the two territories in the Iron Age.

Discussion

An interesting aspect of the Iron Age features was the uniform colour of their fill: almost all contained distinct grey layers telling them apart from the numerous Lengyel Culture and Árpád Age features filled back with mostly dark brown soil.⁸

As for local pottery production, the presence of graphite – used either for decoration or as tempering agent – throughout the whole life of the settlement indicates continuous trade relations with the source of said raw material, just like in the case of Szajk (Gáti 2014, 122), corroborating the hypothesis that everyday life remained largely undisturbed at the time of the advancement of the La Tène Culture, concluding the Hallstatt Period.

Based on the find material, the settlement unearthed at Töttös was inhabited in at least two distinct horizons at the time of the early Hallstatt Culture and the transition of the Hallstatt and La Tène periods, respectively. These inhabitations can perhaps be subdivided into more phases (see below). Unfortunately, the scarcity of metal finds prevents us from specifying the chronology of the site.

The following phases could be distinguished from the find material in the current stage of processing.

Phase 1

The bronze needle, the ‘astral symbol’, and some elements of the pottery, such as the perforated horizontal handle and horizontal channelling hint at the possibility of a very early start for the settlement, perhaps already at the end of the Ha B period.

Phase 2

The neckrings, the ‘moon idols’ or firedogs, and decorative elements like the hatched triangle and meander motifs, pointed knobs, lavish channelling, and burnished surfaces are all characteristic of the Ha C, some also surviving into the Ha D period.



Fig. 22. Metal and bone objects
22. kép. Fém- és csonttárgyak

Phase 3

Graphite-painted geometric decorations, the horn-handled cup, and the handles with flat discs are present from the Ha D and survived into the Hallstatt/La Tène transitional phase. Furthermore, the combination of graphitic net patterns and stamped circle decoration is characteristic of almost every Iron Age site with a horizon corresponding to the Late Hallstatt/Early La Tène transition.

Phase 4

Wheel-thrown S-profile bowls and thick-rimmed pots with vertically brushed bellies are characteristic La Tène forms. As the record of Szajk also corroborates (Gáti 2014, 122), they arrived in southern Transdanubia in the LT B phase at the earliest and remained in fashion for a rather long period. While they undoubtedly represent the final phase of the settlement, the time of its actual abandonment remains obscure. The 'Dacian cup' could also be classified into this phase, which, based on the general dating of the type, could thus be dated to the 2nd century BC.

Concluding remarks

Based on the current state of research, the two newly discovered settlement sites at Töttös were inhabited

at least from the Ha C to the LT B phase. Some elements in their records show very archaic traits, while others seem surprisingly young compared to the bulk of the material.

However, most 'old' and 'young' object types were found in the same features, and currently there seem to be no distinct 'older' and 'younger' settlement parts either.

Practically all La Tène material were fragments of vessels neither of which was almost complete or one that could at least partially be reconstructed – likely a result of the limitations of fieldwork and that only a part of the settlement was excavated.

Preliminary analysis outlined some connections of the settlement at Töttös. The development of southern Transdanubia in the Hallstatt Period seems to have been somewhat different than in the northern parts of the Carpathian Basin, and archaic elements perhaps survived there longer; in many respects, the archaeological record of this area resembles some coeval sites in Baranja in Croatia the most. This connection has been noted already at the dawn of research into the Early Iron Age (see, e.g., Márton 1933, 75).

Two connections seem to have determined life on the settlement. One points to the northwest, from where early La Tène decorations and forms most likely arrived. Besides, the origin of the graphitic

ware from Szajk is another link to the northwest, as the graphite incorporated in the vessels was likely collected in the Bohemian Massif (Havancsák et al. 2009, 12). Although no provenance analysis has been done on the graphite from Töttös, it is feasible that the two closely connected settlements had similar trade relations.

The other direction is east: the decorated bone object, the profiled handles, and the wheel-thrown S-profile vessel fragments might mark a Scythian influence. The strange ‘Dacian cup’ also hints at an eastern connection, highlighting the necessity of further exploration.

None of the above contradicts the current image of Late Hallstatt and Early La Tène Period communities in Transdanubia, while seeing trends similar to the ones outlined at Szajk is reassuring. Fortunately, it seems that Szajk will not remain a unique, solitary Early Iron Age lowland settlement with no parallels in Baranya County.

In light of the above, further analyses, investigations, and interdisciplinary research are necessary to fully uncover every aspect of the Iron Age settlement at Töttös. Hopefully, the results can be delivered in more publications in the near future.

Notes

- 1 For example, the excavations of the Jakab-hegy site were only published in preliminary reports or summaries; see Török 1950; Maráz 1978; Maráz 1979; Maráz 1987.
- 2 I would like to express my gratitude to Csilla Gáti, Dr. Olivér Gábor, and Róbert Lóki, who excavated and published the material from Szajk.
- 3 I would like to express my gratitude to any and all persons who worked on these sites, either during the excavations or with the material afterwards. I would especially like to thank Réka Neményi, lead archaeologist at the excavation and Head of the Archaeological Department at the Janus Pannonius Museum, for the possibility to publish this material.
- 4 The author dates this net pattern to the LT C, which is later than the Hallstatt D phase, to which similar graphite decorations are usually assigned.
- 5 Examples of this decoration on Late Hallstatt pottery are known from the area of Sopron – see, e.g., the Várhely/Burgstall urns – but missing from other sites, and had certainly not been found in southern Transdanubia before.
- 6 A fellow researcher specialised in prehistory suggested that these objects could have been mixed into the Iron Age pit from Lengyel Culture features. I am not convinced by this interpretation because so far, we have nothing similar from the Lengyel Culture in Baranya County – although, to be completely honest, the same can also be said about the Iron Age material.
- 7 With an assortment on Patek 1990, Tabs. 28–29.
- 8 The record of a different site in the same area also corroborates this observation. The Early Iron Age features in Bóly, Trischler-pusztá, excavated in 2022, had identical grey fill, which made them easy to identify amongst the various Roman and Late Middle Age pits and ditches.

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EGY ÚJ VASKORI TELEPÜLÉS: TÖTTÖS, DÉLNYUGAT-MAGYARORSZÁG ELŐZETES JELENTÉS

Összefoglalás

A pécsi Janus Pannonius Múzeum régészei 2021. január és június között végeztek megelőző feltárást az M6 autópálya építéséhez kapcsolódóan Töttös határában, a településtől keletre elhelyezkedő Alsó-megye-dűlő és Mikes-dűlő lelőhelyeken. A két lelőhely két szemközti dombon fekszik, melyeket vízfolyás választ el egymástól. A leletanyag alapján nem kérdéses, hogy ugyanazon település két részéről van szó, melyek egy időben lehettek használatban.

A két lelőhely összesen 6,8 hektáron terül el, ahol több mint 800 objektumot tártunk föl. Az objektumok túlnyomó többsége, mintegy 600, a késő neolitikus-kora rézkori Lengyel-kultúrához tartozik. Elenyésző számbú objektum tehető a középső bronzkori mészbetétes kerámia kultúrájának idejére, néhány tucat pedig az Árpád-korba sorolható. Ezen kívül eddig 42 vaskori objektumot is sikerült azonosítanunk.

A nagyobb kiterjedésű Alsó-megye-dűlőben összesen 30 vaskori objektumot azonosítottunk. Ezek többsége agyagkinyerő vagy tárológödör lehetett eredetileg. A 488., 490. és 580. objektumok például kitapasztott aljú és falú méhkas alakú gödrök voltak (11. kép). Néhány sekélyebb, nagyjából négyzetes formájú objektumot akár épületként is értelmezhetünk. A 92., 304., 440. és 479. objektumoknak eredetileg tapasztott padlója lehetett.

Egy másik, épületként azonosítható objektumban, a 497. számúban egy feltételezett tűzhely maradványait is feltártuk egy ovális mélyedés közepén (2. kép).

Továbbá érdemes megemlíteni, hogy a 305. objektum bontása közben a padlószint fölött egy állat részleges váza került elő (8. kép). A csontokat talán az épület felhagyásakor, rituális céllal helyezték el az objektumban.

A kisebb kiterjedésű Mikes-dűlőben összesen 12 vaskori objektumot azonosítottunk. Ezek közül a 38. objektum esetében merült föl, hogy kisebb épületként, például műhelyként azonosítsuk.

A vaskori objektumok mindkét lelőhelyen inkább a vízfolyáshoz közelebb, a domb meredekebb részén helyezkedtek el. A szóródásuk alapján egy laza településszerkezettel számolhatunk, ahol az egyes háztartások egymástól távolabb helyezkedtek el, akárcsak például Ménfőcsanak esetében.

A két lelőhelyről nagyobb számban kerültek elő háztartáshoz kapcsolható tárgyak. Az összesen nyolc orsógomb közül kiemelendő a beszúrkált pontok és bekarcolt vonalak kombinációjával díszített bikónikus példány (3. kép).

A textilkészítéshez kapcsolhatóak az előkerült szövőszéknehezékek is (13. kép). Ezen kívül két óriási méretű, egyenként 5 kilogrammnál nagyobb

súlyú, kónikus súly is előkerült, méghozzá méhkas alakú gödrökből (13. kép).

Ahogy az településeknél megszokott, a leletanyag túlnyomó többségét kerámia teszi ki. Ugyanazon objektumban együtt fordultak elő finoman iszapolt, magas minőségű „díszerámia” és durvább kivitelű, vastag falú „házikerámia” töredékei. Az edények túlnyomó többsége kézzel készült, csak néhány darabon lehet felfedezni korongolás nyomát.

Némely esetben megfigyelhető a törött edények javítására tett kísérlet, ezt a törésvonalak mentén fúrt lyukak tanúsítják. A legnyilvánvalóbb ilyen példa az Alsó-megye-dűlő 363. objektumából előkerült kantharos. A fényezett, fekete felületű, besimított díszű edény valószínűleg több volt, mint egyszerű használati tárgy, ezért próbálhatták megjavítani (4. kép).

Az edények leggyakoribb formái a fazekak, tálak, csészék és szitulák, valamint néhány fedő fültöredéke is előkerült. A fazekak között a *Kegelhalsgefäße* formák gyakoriak. A behúzott peremű tálakat gyakran díszítik turbántekecseléssel. A korongolt tálak között S-profilúak is előfordulnak. A felhúzott fülű csészék leggyakrabban omphalos aljjal vannak ellátva, belül feketén fényezettek (14. kép). A fentebb már említett, reparált csésze a kantharosok közé tartozik, a típus jelenlétéhez köthetőek további magasan felhúzott fülek is. Egy párhuzam nélküli csésze a Mikes-dűlő 41. objektumából került elő (5. kép). A lapos aljú, kónikus falú, durva kidolgozású edény leginkább az Alföldön, Észak-kelet Magyarországon és Erdélyben ismert „dák csésze” típusall mutat formai rokonságot.

Ami az edények díszítését illeti, nagy variációban jelentkeznek a legkülönbözőbb felületeken. Vízszintes, ujjbenyomkodásos bordákat találunk a durvább edényeknek elsősorban a nyakán, pereme alatt, míg rövid bevagdálások sora leggyakrabban nagyméretű edények nyakán, vállvonalán jelenik meg (17. kép). A vékonyabb falú edényeken gyakori a függőleges kannelúra, elsősorban a vállvonalon. Néhány esetben a nyakon besimított vízszintes árkok is megjelennek, ami archaikus díszítésnek tekinthető (14. kép).

Geometrikus díszítések több variációban is megfigyelhetők. Rövid, besimított vonalakból álló háromszögek, és bekarcolt sraffozott háromszögek is előfordulnak több esetben, ami tipikusnak mondható Hallstatt közegben (18. kép). Egy lapos töredékre nyájából szimmetrikus háló-mintát karcoltak.

Talán a legérdekesebb geometrikus díszítés a Mikes-dűlő 50. objektumában előkerült urnán figyelhető meg. A vállvonalon körbefutó, majdnem teljes meander-minta díszítésként gyakori a Hallstatt időszakban, de elsősorban festett és nem bekarcolt változatban, mint itt (18. kép).

Grafitall készített díszítések több változata is megjelenik, elsősorban vékonyfalú edényeken. Grafitos festék vagy slip használatával teljes felületeket borítottak be, míg elsősorban tálak belsejében grafitall besimított hálómintákat hoztak létre (19. kép). Az Alsó-megye-dűlő 363. objektumában szerencsés módon grafitrögöket is találtunk, melyeknek későbbi vizsgálata fényt vethet a telep távolsági kereskedelmi kapcsolataira (10. kép).

A legfiatalabb leletanyaghoz tartoznak a különböző bepecsételt díszű edények, melyek csak az LT B időszaktól jelennek meg a régióban (20. kép).

Nem edények, de kerámiából készült néhány olyan tárgy, amik különösen izgalmasak egy Hallstatt telep esetében. Az ún. „asztrális szimbólum”, egy lapos, hét megmaradt nyúlvánnyal rendelkező agyagtárgy inkább az Uramezős kultúra anyagában jellemző (21. kép). A három tűzikutya, vagy holdidol közül kettő szögletes formájú, benyomkodott bordadíszekkel ellátott, és középen átlukasztott formát mutat, míg a harmadik lábakon álló, állatfejben végződő típushoz tartozik (21. kép).

Rendkívül kevés fémtárgy került elő a településről – egy visszahajtott végű, félbetört bronztorques és egy hosszú bronz tű inkább Uramezős hagyománynak tekinthető, míg az ívelt hátú vaskés (22. kép) a késői Hallstatt és korai LT időszakban is tipikusnak mondható.

Az állatcsontokból készült tárgyak között átfúrt vadkanagyart és hegyesre csiszolt, átfúrt „bogozót” is találunk. A legérdekesebb egy laposra csiszolt, bekarcolt geometrikus mintákkal díszített, ívelt csontdarab (9. kép), aminek rendeltetése egyelőre kérdéses.

Ami a település időbeli elhelyezését illeti, még számos kérdés vár választ. Annyi mindenesetre feltűnő, hogy viszonylag több, archaikusnak mondható elemet találunk a leletanyagban, ami egyes objektumokon belül egyszerre jelentkezik Ha C és Ha D elemekkel. A település élete biztosan folytatódik az LT B időszakig, ahogyan azt a duzzadt peremű grafitos fazekak, S-profilú tálak, bepecsételt díszek tanúsítják.

