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Tószeg Pottery at the Peabody Museum of Harvard University*

In a recent review of an outstanding book by Hugh Hencken, C.F.C. Hawkes wrote: 'Central to his range between Assyria and the Atlantic are the centuries B.C., from about seventeenth to fifth. Each land's labors are heavy, movement around them therefore hard, yet he travels in modest cheerfulness through all'¹. One may discuss many subjects from this wide area, but I am more concerned at present with another aspect of Professor Hencken's work. I wish to deal with a small European assemblage at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University: this is the pottery of Tószeg, Hungary.

Like Vladimir Fewkes, Robert W. Ehrich, and some other scholars at this museum, Hugh Hencken played a significant part in fostering and maintaining contacts with collections and archaeologists in Europe. Therefore, the prehistoric material at the Peabody Museum includes one of the largest and most important archaeological assemblages to be found in the United States. The finds were acquired by the Museum by means of exchange, purchase and gifts from private collectors, and through the efforts of scholars connected with the Museum throughout its history. Hugh Hencken has been directly responsible for the acquisition and publication of a great number of important pieces in this large assemblage, which has been for many years an indispensable resource to those prehistorians in the United States, who were interested in the archaeology of Europe.

Although the collections from the Carpathian Basin do not belong to the earliest European materials obtained by the Peabody, Bronze Age finds from Székesfehérvár were donated to the museum in 1873. That is more than a century ago².

The small assemblage of Tószeg came to Cambridge, Massachusetts, from the American Museum of Natural History in 1941³, and from the University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge, England⁴, in 1950. The pots and

* Dedicated to Hugh Hencken.

¹ Am. Journal Arch. 78, 1974, 92 ff.

² In collaboration with Arthur Bankoff and George Radan, the author prepared for publication all archaeological finds from the Carpathian Basin. This work is now going to press.

³ S. Foltiny, The Hungarian Archaeological Collection of the American Museum of Natural History, Uralic and Altaic Series, Vol. 77 (Bloomington, Indiana 1969) 25 ff.

⁴ See the inventory nos. 50-10-40/6038-40; 6044; 6057-58; 6064 and 6069.

sherds were acquired by exchange, but they were originally in the Hungarian National Museum in Budapest.

The material from Tószeg can be described as follows⁵:

41-21-40/2524: Fig. 1,5. Small jug, flaring body, high concave neck and outcurving lip; one handle on the lower part of the neck. Tan. H. 7.5, diam. of mouth 5.5, base 2.5 cm.

50-10-40/6069: Fig. 1,6. Tall-necked jug, with outcurving lip, flaring body, and lug. Black-dark brown. H. 10.7, W. 8.8 cm.

50-10-40/6069: Fig. 2,4. Tall-necked cup, with high handle, and incised decoration. Tószeg-C level. Black-dark brown. H. 10.7 (with handle) W. 8 cm⁶.

50-10-40/6057: Fig. 1,8. Tall-necked jug, flaring body, outcurving lip. Traces of lug. Orange-tan. H. 10, W. 6.7 cm.

50-10-40/6058: Fig. 1,4. Tall-necked jug, flaring body, conical neck. Traces of lug. Dark tan - grey black. H. 12.2, W. 10.2 cm.

50-40-10/6044: Fig. 1,1. Potsherd, with 'broom-brushed' surface.

50-10-40/6044: Fig. 1,2. Potsherd, with 'broom-brushed' surface and rim decoration.

50-10-40/6038: Fig. 2,1. Decorated rim fragment, from layer C, at Tószeg. Buff.

50-10-40/6038: Fig. 1,7. Decorated potsherd, from the Tószeg-C level. Buff.

50-10-40/6038: Fig. 2,5. Fragment of a bowl, from the Tószeg-C level. The decoration consists of concentric grooves, half-circles and bosses.

50-10-40/6039: Fig. 2,3. Tall-necked black ware vessel, with high handle and incised decoration. Tószeg-C layer. H. 15.8 (with handle), W. 14.7 cm.

50-10-40/6040: Fig. 2,2. Short-necked jug, with flaring body, high handle and outcurving rim. Incised decoration. Tószeg-C level. Black. H. 7.3, W. 10.4 cm.

50-10-40/6064: Fig. 1,3. Small jug, with handle. Tan. H. 7.5, W. 7 cm.

Thanks to recent research work, our knowledge of the Tószeg finds, and the cultures represented at that site, has been enriched. As is generally known, Tószeg played an important part in the Bronze Age research of the Carpathian Basin until the middle of the 1950-s. The phases of the relative chronology of the Hungarian Bronze Age were based on the Tószeg layers⁷. The excavations of the last thirty years in Hungary and the middle Danube Basin have brought about significant

⁵ In the description, the following abbreviations are used: diam. = diameter; fig. = figure; H. = height; no. = number; W. = width. Each object is preceded by its inventory number, and a reference to its photograph. The author wishes to thank Prof. Dr. Stephen Williams, Director of the Peabody Museum, and Prof. Dr. Hugh Hencken, Chairman and Director of Prehistoric Studies, American School of Prehistoric Research, for the permission to study, arrange and publish the Hungarian Collection (the Tószeg finds are a part of this assemblage). The financial help of the Wenner-Gren Foundation in New York made possible the preparation of the photographs. The study of the comparative material in the Carpathian Basin was undertaken with the assistance of the Smithsonian Foreign Currency Program in Washington, D. C. I should like to express my gratitude for the hospitality of the Institute of Pre- and Protohistory at Bonn University, Germany where this contribution was prepared.

⁶ Although this pot has the same inventory number as the previous one, the two cups do not belong to the same chronological level.

⁷ V. G. Childe, *The Danube in Prehistory* (Oxford 1929) 216; F. v. Tompa, *25 Jahre Urgeschichtsforschung in Ungarn 1912-1936*. Ber. RGK 24-25, 1934-35 (1937) 64 ff.; P. Patay, *Frühbronzezeitliche Kulturen in Ungarn*. Diss. Pannonicae, Ser. 2, No. 13 (Budapest 1938); A. Mozsolics, *Die Ausgrabungen in Tószeg im Jahre 1948*. Acta Arch. Hung. 2, 1952, 35 ff.; J. Banner, I. Bóna u. L. Márton, *Die Ausgrabungen von L. Márton in Tószeg*. Acta Arch. Hung. 10, 1957, 1 ff.



1 Tószeg Pottery at the Peabody Museum.

1. Inv. No. 50-10-10/6044. - 2. Inv. No. 50-10-40/6044. - 3. Inv. No. 50-10-40/6064. - 4. Inv. No. 50-10-40/6058. - 5. Inv. No. 41-21-40/2524. - 6. Inv. No. 50-10-40/6069. - 7. Inv. No. 50-10-40/6038. - 8. Inv. No. 50-10-40/6057.

changes in this respect. It has become evident that the chronology of the Tószeg strata cannot be identified with that of the Carpathian Basin. In the middle Tisza area, where Tószeg lies, the early phase of the Nagyrév culture developed from the Makó group of the Zók culture, under the influence of the Bell Beaker culture⁸. The typical early Nagyrév vessels are not represented at the Peabody Museum. Our jugs (Fig. 1,4–6,8) show a late stage in the development process of the Nagyrév pottery. They may belong to a period around 1800 B.C. or to the eighteenth century⁹.

In this context, we mention two pottery fragments with 'broom-brushed' surface (Fig. 1,1–2), which cannot be assigned to a specific cultural level in Tószeg. In the files of the museum no closer attribution than 'Bronze Age' is given. Although the 'broom-brushed' surface appears in the Makó group of the Zók culture¹⁰, that group is not known from Tószeg. 'Broom-brushed' decoration is frequent in the Nagyrév layers at Tószeg¹¹, and it is characteristic of the Hatvan culture¹². Our fragments belonged either to the Nagyrév or the Hatvan culture.

The small jug with one handle (Fig. 1,3) leads us to the Hatvan culture. In the central and northeastern areas of the middle Danube Basin, this group played a significant role during the early Bronze Age. Although the first finds were discovered around 1854, a thorough study was first written by N. Kalicz in 1968¹³. He was able to demonstrate that the Hatvan culture developed from the Nyírség group of the Zók culture, in the area of the upper Tisza. Strong influences of the Kurgan (pit-grave) culture, and elements of the Balkan Bronze Age, may be discovered in this cultural group. N. Kalicz described more than two hundred sites and published a reliable distribution map¹⁴. Similar or comparable jugs are a frequent type in the distribution area of the Hatvan culture. I. Bóna¹⁵ and S. Foltiny¹⁶ mentioned them from Tószeg¹⁷. N. Kalicz enumerated many parallels or comparable specimens from other sites¹⁸.

N. Kalicz has shown that the beginning of the Hatvan culture falls to the period

⁸ R. Schreiber, Die Probleme der Frühbronzezeit in Budapest. Arch. Ért. 99, 1972, 151 ff. (in Hungarian); 165 ff. (German summary); see p. 164.

⁹ Cf. Bóna, Acta Antiqua et Arch. 8, 1965, 64 ff. – See also A. Gazdapusztai, Das bronzezeitliche Gräberfeld von Battonya. Acta Antiqua et Arch. 12, 1968, 1 ff., esp. 37.

¹⁰ N. Kalicz, Die Frühbronzezeit in Nordost-Ungarn. Arch. Hungarica 45, 1968, 84; Schreiber, *op. cit.* (note 8) 164.

¹¹ Mozsolics, *op. cit.* (note 7) 54 and pls. 21–26; cf. Schreiber, *op. cit.* (note 8) 156 ff.; 161.

¹² Kalicz, *op. cit.* (note 10) 154 ff.; Mozsolics, *op. cit.* (note 7) pls. 8–10; 12–14; 16–17.

¹³ Kalicz, *op. cit.* (note 10) 110 ff. – For previous bibliography, see Arch. Ért. 48, 1935, 16 ff.; Ber. RGK 24–25, 1934–35, 86 ff.; Mozsolics, *op. cit.* (note 7) 42 ff.; 54 ff.; 65, fig. 3: layers g-o; Banner, Bóna u. Márton, *op. cit.* (note 7) 93 ff.; 112; Bóna, Geschichte der frühen und mittleren Bronzezeit in Ungarn und im mittleren Donauraum. Annales Univ. Scientiarum de Rolando Eötvös Nominatae, Sectio Hist. 3, 1961, 9 ff. esp. 10 f.; M. Gimbutas, Bronze Age Cultures in Central and Eastern Europe (The Hague 1965) 199 ff.

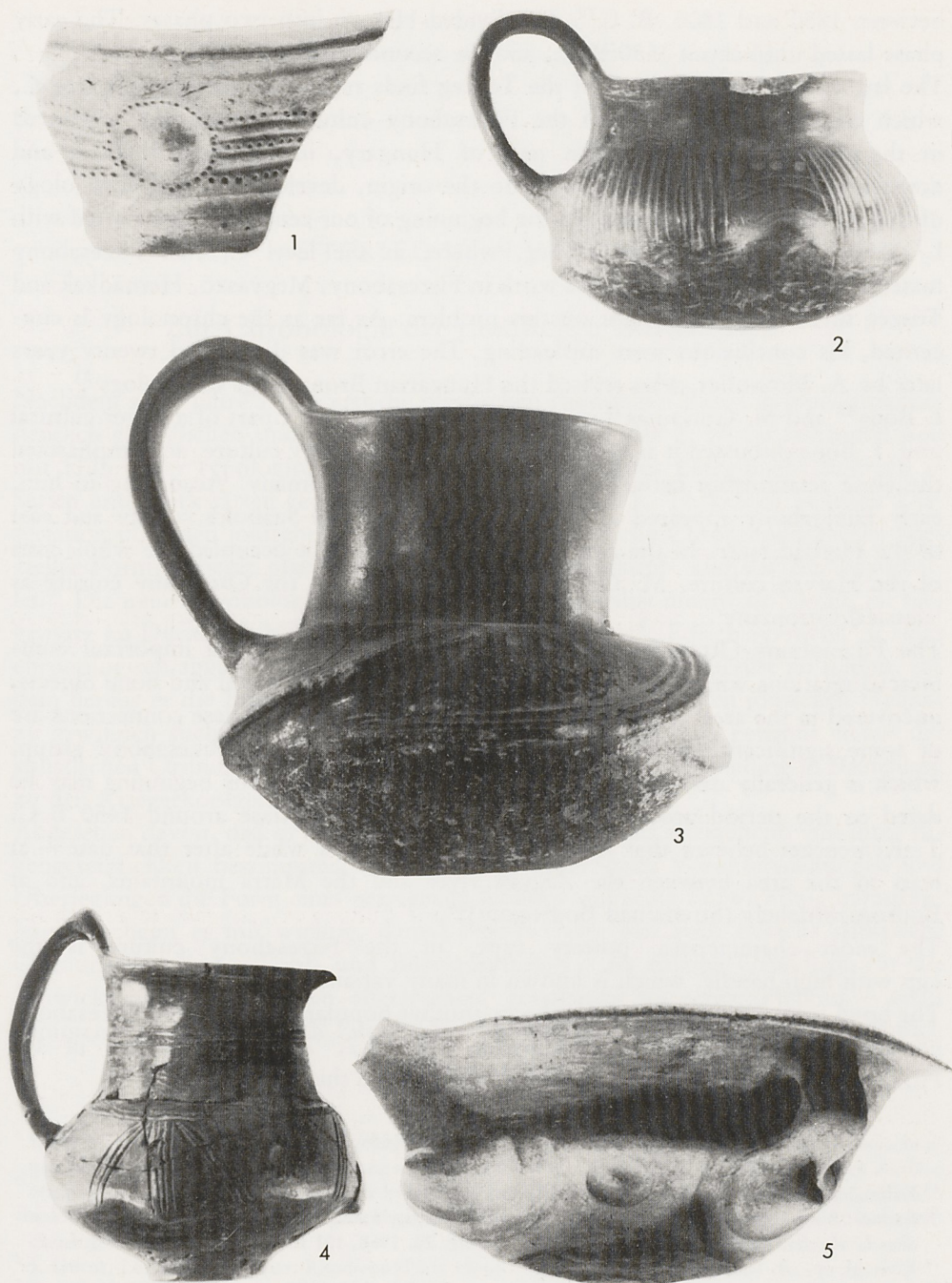
¹⁴ Kalicz, *op. cit.* (note 10) 115 fig. 4.

¹⁵ Banner, Bóna u. Márton, *op. cit.* (note 7) 95 fig. 4, 16; 114, fig. 18, 19; 124, fig. 16, 21.

¹⁶ Foltiny, *op. cit.* (note 3) 27.

¹⁷ Mozsolics, *op. cit.* (note 7) 54, found the Hatvan culture in the levels g-o (150–361 cm below the present level); Kalicz, *op. cit.* (note 10) 126, also described finds of that culture from Tószeg.

¹⁸ Kalicz, *op. cit.* (note 10) pl. 75, 4; 76, 5; 82, 6.9.12; 83, 2–3. 8; 89, 14; 92, 7 and other pieces.



2 Tószeg Pottery at the Peabody Museum.
1. Inv. No. 50-10-40/6038. - 2. Inv. No. 50-10-40/6040. - 3. Inv. No. 50-10-40/6039. - 4. Inv. No. 50-10-40/6069. - 5. Inv. No. 50-10-40/6038.

between 1850 and 1800. B. C.¹⁹. He divided Hatvan into two phases. The early phase lasted until about 1650 B.C., and the second until 1500 B.C.

The latest, and largest group, of the Tószeg finds represents the layer Tószeg C, which contains the material of the Füzesabony culture. Similar finds appeared in the central and northeastern part of Hungary, in southern Slovakia and northeast Transylvania. Researches into the origin, development and chronology of this group have continued from the beginning of our century. They started with L. Márton's excavations in Tószeg, where, in the level C, rich Füzesabony material was found²⁰. F. Tompa's work in Füzesabony, Megyaszó, Hernádkak and Tószeg threw much new light on this problem. As far as the chronology is concerned, his conclusions were misleading. The error was discovered twenty years later by A. Mozsolics, who revised the Hungarian Bronze Age chronology²¹.

I. Bóna²² and M. Gimbutas²³ considered Füzesabony as a part of a larger cultural unit. I. Bóna discussed it as the Gyulavarsánd-Füzesabony culture, and emphasized the close relationship between Gyulavarsánd and Ottomány. According to him, early Füzesabony appeared in the northeastern part of Szabolcs county and east of the Hernád river. In the course of its development it occupied the whole area of the Hatvan culture. M. Gimbutas treated it within the Ottomány culture as 'classical Ottomány'.

The Füzesabony-Ottomány-Gyulavarsánd complex maintained important commercial relations with the Mycenaean Empire, as pottery, metal and bone objects, uncovered in the area of the middle Danube Basin, indicate. These connections are of some significance in determining the chronology of the Füzesabony group, which is generally divided into three phases: A, B and C. The beginning may be dated to the period around 1600 B.C., and the last phase around 1450 B.C. T. Kemenczei believes that this group survived for a while after that date – at least in the area between the Zagyva river and the Mátra mountains, and at Bodrogszerdahely (Streda nad Bodrogom)²⁴.

The most characteristic pottery type, of the Füzesabony culture is the cup with high handle, which is known in many variants (Fig. 2,2–4)²⁵.

The bowl from Tószeg (Fig. 2,5), shows another popular feature of the Füzesabony pottery²⁶. The less typical fragments (Fig. 1,7; 2,1) were found in the Füzesabony layer. Therefore, they were assigned to this group²⁷.

¹⁹ Kalicz, *op. cit.* (note 10) 185.

²⁰ Banner, Bóna u. Márton, *op. cit.* (note 7) 96; 116 and fig. 6 and 20; F. Köszegi, Mittelbronzezeitliches Gräberfeld in Pusztaszikszó. *Acta Arch. Hung.* 20, 1968, 101 ff.; see 124 f.

²¹ Köszegi, *op. cit.* (note 20) 125 f.

²² Bóna, *op. cit.* (note 13) 14 ff.; cf. now: J. Banner u. I. Bóna, Mittelbronzezeitliche Tell-Siedlung bei Békés. *Fontes Arch. Hung.* (Budapest 1974) 70 ff.; 148 ff.

²³ Gimbutas, *op. cit.* (note 13) 195 ff.; 200. This idea has been rejected by J. Banner: see Banner u. Bóna, *op. cit.* (note 22) 77 ff.

²⁴ *Arch. Ert.* 90, 1963, 169 ff.; cf. Köszegi, *op. cit.* (note 20) 126; 136.

²⁵ Bóna, *op. cit.* (note 13) 16; B. Polla, Birituelle Füzesabonyer Begräbnisstätte in Streda nad Bodrogom. *Gräberfelder aus der Älteren Bronzezeit in der Slowakei 1* (Bratislava 1960) 199 ff.; Köszegi, *op. cit.* (note 20) 116 ff. (with previous literature).

²⁶ Köszegi, *op. cit.* (note 20) 121; Foltiny, *op. cit.* (note 3) 33.

²⁷ For the latest discussion of our problem cf. *Acta Arch. Hung.* 27, 1975, 275 ff.