

**WOLFGANG DAVID, Studien zu Ornamentik und Datierung der bronzezeitlichen Depotfundgruppe Hajdúsámson-Apa-Ighiel-Zajta.** Muzeul Național al Unirii Alba Iulia, Bibliotheca Musei Apvlensis, XVIII. Verlag Altip S. A., Alba Iulia 2002. 60,— €. ISBN 973-8141-38-9. 2 Bände mit 911 Seiten, 354 Tafeln, 18 Karten und einer Beilage.

The Early and Middle Bronze Age hoards of the Carpathian Basin are a much studied phenomenon, not least through the fundamental work of Amália Mozsolics over many years. And within those hoards, the disc-butted axes (Nackenscheibenäxte) represent a major element. Their unusual appearance, clearly non-utilitarian, and the frequent appearance of elaborate decoration on blade and butt, have made them a magnet for many scholars over the years, at least as much as, if not more than, the famous swords from Hajdúsámson and Apa. The prestige nature of these goods marks them out as something exceptional both for the people who made and used them, and for modern scholarship. Because of their richness and attractiveness, the hoards have served as a marker for the manifestations of the Early and Middle Bronze Ages in the middle Danubian province and in spite of the many difficulties in understanding them they continue to attract scholars.

Wolfgang David's doctoral dissertation of 1992/93 for the Ludwig-Maximilian-Universität München is the latest example of this tendency. It is presented here in updated form, with finds included up to 1999 and relevant literature up to the end of 2001. The appearance of the work in 2002 under the imprint of the the Alba Iulia National Museum, well produced in two volumes by ALTIP Verlag of that city (card cover, glued binding), is a sign of the times – gone are the days of interminable waits for publication, paper fit only for hygienic use, poorly matched illustrations and text, and similar problems. The computer-produced text and illustrations by the author clearly enabled the whole enterprise to proceed with great rapidity. The illustrations are broadly satisfactory, though the detail of line drawings disappears at the edges of maps and merges in some of the more finely detailed ornament.

David begins with a review of the state of research, which means a trawl through the literature from Reinecke onwards. Especial attention is paid to the chronological schemes of Mozsolics, Bóna and Hänsel; this is important for later developments, as we shall see. Hänsel's 1968 scheme was severely criticised in reviews at the time but has nevertheless entered the literature as the main source for dating in the Carpathian Basin, not least because so many of his students have been active in south-east Europe. David highlights certain inconsistencies in the Hänsel scheme which make the dating of the crucial Br A2 – A3 – B1 sequence (and its congeners in the Carpathian Basin) doubtful. Whether the scheme can be rescued remains to be seen – certainly David, as a pupil of Georg Kossack, does not attempt to do so, instead relating finds and objects to an adaptation of the Reinecke system for Bavaria.

From here we move into the most substantial part of the work, a consideration of the Nackenscheibenäxte (a total of 194 examples are catalogued). This long and extremely detailed chapter represents the core of the work, and accounts for some 240 pages of the whole. As before, we start with a review of the literature, going back to Nestor (whose divisions broadly still hold good). Subsequent subdivision by Mozsolics, Hänsel and Vulpe build on Nestor's foundations and while there are differences in detail these are more a matter of emphasis than anything else. By contrast, Ehrengard Kroeger-Michel adopted a quite different approach, based on stylistic analysis as much as form, and utilised seriation charts in an attempt to extract meaning from the data. In some respects, this approach is closest to David's own, though as he points out, the seriation results contributed little or nothing to the conclusions and represent a striking case of taking a sledge-hammer to crack a nut.

Now we enter the critically important part of the analysis. David bases his formal typology closely on Nestor, distinguishing the same main division into A and B (A = axes without shaft-tube, B = with shaft tube), and subdivisions at least of A (A<sub>1</sub> = disc butts of mushroom-like profile, here named “Variante Hajdúsámson”; A<sub>2</sub> = disc butts with central protruding knob, here named “Variante Gaura”). The subdivisions of B are different from those of Nestor; David subdivides Nestor’s type B<sub>1</sub> (axes with short shaft-tubes) according to the form of the disc butt, sees four variants of type B<sub>2</sub> (long shaft-tube) and does not recognise types B<sub>3</sub> and B<sub>4</sub> at all. All this is relatively unimportant, because what David is really concerned to do is to analyse the ornament on the axes and distinguish styles (which might or might not correlate with workshops or artists). The upshot is that we are presented with a “Classic Hajdúsámson-Apa Style” and a “Post-Classic Hajdúsámson-Apa Style”, both separate from the “Middle Danubian Style Groups”. Within these styles a series of “style variants” are recognised, notably the “rich” or “full” style variants (Pauliş, Hajdúsámson, Apa-Szeghalom, and Gaura), and the “tectonic” (“strongly rectilinear-geometric”) variants (Tarian, Téglás, Turda-Zajta, Friedenau and Krüssow), all within the classic style; Gemer-Glienau, Piliny-Meißen and Stefkowa within the post-classic; and “Letkés-Alsónémedi” and smaller groups within the Middle Danubian. Following this, David compares the presence of decoration in particular styles with the axe forms; this information is summarised (after an extremely lengthy discussion) in Abb. 3.14, S.197. Perhaps not surprisingly, there is a close correlation between the two. Thus all eight decorated axes of Hajdúsámson variant are ornamented in the Pauliş and Hajdúsámson styles (which are in any case very closely related); all the Gaura axes are in the Apa-Szeghalom and Gaura styles; and so on. Most variation occurs with the B<sub>1</sub> axes, where they may be distributed between one, two or three styles. But the numbers of decorated axes in these groups is so small that it is arguable whether meaningful results are thus obtained (according to Abb. 3.14 there are 73 decorated axes in total though there appears to be an error in the figures for the Gaura form so the total is, I believe, 71); the largest number of axes in a single style is seven. Even the famous axes from the eponymous hoard of Hajdúsámson do not, on a cursory glance, look that similar in ornamentation except in a general sense. Could it be that David is embarking on a mission that is unlikely to succeed?

In the long section on dating, the position of the Hajdúsámson-Apa and Dunaújváros-Kosziderpadlás hoard groups are crucial. Few objects provide such a clear fix in time as pins, which furthermore give a good indication of correlations with points further west, e.g. Bavaria. Classic sickle-pins of Regelsbrunn type, as occur in the hoards from Budapest-Rákospalota and Simontornya, are a good indication; other pin types are somewhat later. To date the Koszider phase parallel with BzB in Bavaria is no surprise; but David goes further. Although there are no direct associations of axes in the earlier phase of the Hajdúsámson-Apa style with pins, stratigraphical indications as well as stylistic considerations show that this style too, and therewith the Hajdúsámson-Apa hoard phase, must also date to BzB (earlier) (S.234). From Anhang F (Beilage, end of volume 2) we can see this conclusion tabulated. This is of course a rather different story from that usually presented, and one may predict a strong reaction in some quarters. Yet the flow of the argument is so clearly presented and strongly argued that it seems hard to deny the truth of the proposition.

The attempt to date each axe type and ornament style really seems *de trop* after this, and the reader is most easily referred to Abb. 3.17–19 for a summary of David’s findings. More interesting is the demonstration (S.263) that Nackenscheibenäxte are found initially only in hoards and only later in graves, i.e. no grave is earlier than the earliest hoard. What is more, there is a gradual move in distributional terms from Hungary and Transylvania towards the

north and north-west, perhaps to be connected with the exploitation of the ore deposits of Slovakia by “bearers of the Piliny culture”. This is followed up on S.271 ff. by a discussion of the geographical development of Nackenscheibenäxte, where three “zones” are distinguished. Zone 1 represents east Hungary and west Transylvania or the Hajdúsámson-Apa area “as an originating zone”, whereas Zones 2 and 3 represent areas to the north, north-west and west where influence and/or importation of original ideas took place. Not surprisingly, therefore, the origin of the Nackenscheibenäxte is to be sought in Zone 1, and specifically in the tradition of prestige axe production since the Chalcolithic in east-central Europe. David’s discussion of Nackenscheibenäxte ends with an almost post-processual paragraph: “Are they [the axes] to be attributed to one or more persons? Reasons for their uniqueness would exist in both cases, for only through their individuality does the value of particular axes as status symbols, which rests to a considerable degree on their uninterchangeability, become apparent. And so each axe has to a considerable degree a characteristic ‘face’ and originally may have also possessed its own ‘name’” (S.281).

After this, the discussions of Nackenkammäxte (chapter 4), Schaftröhrenäxte (chapter 5), swords and daggers (chapter 6) and (very briefly) spearheads (chapter 7) seem relatively minor in importance, though at least in the case of the axes typological divisions and dating are important. Nackenkammäxte (40 examples) have an ancestry that goes back to the shaft-hole tools of the Early Bronze Age in the Balkans, though this has little bearing on the tools decorated in the spiral-related designs of the Hajdúsámson-Apa group, which are attributed to the Bz B period. Interestingly, although some motifs are common to Nackenkammäxte and Nackenscheibenäxte these do not bear the full decoration of the “styles” identified by David. Schaftröhrenäxte (77 examples) are further interesting because of their wide distribution, from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean, and from central Germany to south-east Transylvania – though the majority of finds occur within the Carpathian-Bohemian mountain ring. As David says (S.327), the especial importance of the axes in the hoards of Hajdúsámson, Apa and Szeghalom is that more than any other type they permit a direct connection between the earlier hoards of the Hajdúsámson-Apa group and the graves and hoards found west and north of this area; moreover, the axe in the Hajdúsámson hoard is decorated in the Hajdúsámson-Apa style, which provides an important connection with the Nackenscheibenäxte. Not all is simple, however; Schaftröhrenäxte, like Nackenkammäxte, begin earlier than the Hajdúsámson-Apa hoard phase, and the Type I axe from Hajdúsámson itself has characteristics that could be later; typologically it would be placed in a late part of Bz A2 (A2c or A3), while the hoard as a whole is firmly dated by David to Bz B (early) – a contradiction that appears in the Tables (e. g. Abb. 5.5, 5.6; contrast with Abb. 5.8 and Beilage 1).

David’s concluding chapter has much to say about the question of style, and in particular whether the Hajdúsámson-Apa style can be seen as purely decorative or also symbolic. Since it changed considerably during its lifetime there is clearly no one answer to this question. There is also the important matter of its association with weapons in hoards, and the contrary fact that axes were apparently more important for inclusion in these hoards than weapons. David stresses here the special nature of objects made and decorated in this special manner, the creation of elaborate swords for (presumably) elite warriors, and the far-reaching nature of the contacts in form and ornament that the Hajdúsámson-Apa hoards demonstrate. So far, so good. What he might have gone on to discuss was the nature of Early and Middle Bronze Age society in central Europe insofar as we can reconstruct it from the sources available; and how these related to the practice of selecting objects for deposition in hoards, and then depositing them.

David has made here a very significant contribution to the study of the Early and Middle Bronze Ages in central Europe. The problem for the reader is the indigestible nature of the text, the interminable discussion of minute stylistic sub-groups, and the difficulty of using the results. To have the Nackenscheibenäxte subdivided into such cumbersome groups as A.1.2.1.2 (itself subdivided into decorated and undecorated) is hardly helpful. It has been truly said that one picture is better than a thousand words, and while Volume 2 provides an enormous amount of illustrative material (most of it presumably taken from published sources) it is difficult to change constantly between the two volumes, especially as the bindings soon become weak with such frequent reference. How much better it would have been if David had omitted much of his super-detailed discussion (or relegated it to an Appendix) and instead concentrated on making his points clear by including many more tables, diagrams and figures in the text. That said, the Appendices are a useful source of reference, once one has learnt how to use them.

There is a rather disconcerting number of typographical errors, probably the result of the author submitting his own camera-ready copy, and some shortcomings (of omission and commission) in the Bibliography.

All in all, this work by Wolfgang David represents a most significant contribution to the study of the Early/Middle Bronze Age in the Carpathian Basin, with ramifications that reach far beyond. Though hard work to use, it illustrates the author's extremely detailed knowledge of his material, and his sound judgements on dating and other matters (even if some of them will raise eyebrows). While I could have wished for an easier read, I will return to the book frequently when consideration of this crucial developmental phase of the European Bronze Age is in question.

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**REINHARD JUNG, Kastanas. Ausgrabungen in einem Siedlungshügel der Bronze- und Eisenzeit Makedoniens 1975–1979. Die Drehscheibenkeramik der Schichten 19 bis 11.** Mit Beiträgen von Bernhard Hänsel und Bernhard Weninger. *Prähistorische Archäologie in Südosteuropa*, Band 18. Verlag Oetker/Voges, Kiel 2002. ISBN 3-935305-03-6; ISSN 0732-1725. 2 Bände mit 585 Seiten, 82 Abbildungen, 108+XVII Tafeln und einer CD-ROM.

This study describes the Late Bronze Age wheelmade pottery from Kastanas. It consists of a general overview by B. Hänsel, an introduction (Chapter 1), a history of research in Macedonia (Chapter 2), a description of the wares present (Chapter 3), a description of the pottery (Chapter 4) with accompanying catalogue and illustrations in Volume 2 (Chapter 9), a chronology of the different phases (Chapter 5), a comparison with stratigraphy from other sites in Macedonia (Chapter 6) and a conclusion (Chapter 7, also in Greek). An appendix to Volume I by R. Jung and B. Weninger discusses the C-14 dating in relation to the archaeological dating at Kastanas. Apart from the catalogue Chapter 9, Volume II includes a brief catalogue to show the stratigraphic position of every sherd discussed (Chapter 10), a catalogue of comparanda from other sites (Chapter 11) and keys to the decorative types (Chapter 12). A CD-ROM has colour photographs of some of the material (indexed pp.584–585).