

weiteren einschlägigen Belegen zu forschen. Die Fund-Dokumentation unserer Felsgeräte ist, wie gesagt, kaum ermutigend. Daran trägt nicht zuletzt der Umstand Schuld, daß Artefakte der fraglichen Art in urgeschichtlichen Fundarchiven und periodisch erscheinenden Fundchroniken dem Riesenkomplex „bandkeramischer Steinkeile und Steinhacken“ zugewiesen und einverleibt werden⁷. Auch sind einstweilen alle Überlegungen müßig, wie die beiden kreuzschneidigen Steinhacken aus dem Unteren Isartal und dem Vorderen Oberpfälzer Wald dem Neolithschema und dem frühen Besiedlungsablauf in Bayern einzugliedern wären⁸, selbst wenn man sie als Kupferaxt-Imitation akzeptiert⁹.

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⁷ Nur tastend wird hier und da die Herauslösung mehr oder weniger asymmetrisch gebildeter Streitaxte aus dem Bestand durchbohrter „Schuhleistenkeile“ versucht, z. B. bei K. H. Brandt, Bremer Arch. Bl. 4, 1965, 9ff., bes. 11f.; M. Zápotocký, Památky Arch. 57, 1966, 172ff., bes. 178ff.

⁸ Vgl. R. A. Maier, Jahresber. d. Bayer. Bodendenkmalpflege 5, 1964, 9ff.

⁹ Zu zwei von H. Berlekamp (Ausgrabungen u. Funde 1, 1956, 123) angesprochenen steinernen Nachbildungen „ungarischer Kupferaxte“ vgl. Driehaus in der oben Anm. 2 genannten Arbeit S. 61 Anm. 11.

The Plzeň shield: a problem in Nordic and East Mediterranean relations. The purpose of this note is to draw attention to an error that has been perpetuated in the literature of central European Urnfields in general and of beaten bronze parade equipment in particular. I refer to the shield from Plzeň-Jikalka in Bohemia, which was found in 1896 and now lies in the Museum in Plzeň.

The shield was first published in *Sbornik městského historického musea v Plzni* 2, 1911, 96, where the circumstances of its discovery were accurately laid out. I believe however that this report was misunderstood by subsequent authors, and this has led to rather important implications for our understanding of relations between central Europe and the east Mediterranean in the early first millenium B. C.

In 1929 V. G. Childe¹, in discussing the range of equipment of the Knovíz culture, stated that the Plzeň shield was “the earliest dated bronze shield from central Europe. . . Being found in a unitary hoard it enables us to date other specimens. . . . The Plzeň shield was found in a Knovíz-Lausitz pot with a fragmentary sword blade . . . , Italian and button sickles, a pin-head . . . , and a spiked tutulus with very low spike. It is assigned to phase E”. At more or less the same time as Childe was writing, E. Sprockhoff in his valuable book on the German Bronze Age² also claimed that the Plzeň shield belonged to a hoard. „Der Depotfund gehört der jüngeren Bronzezeit an und entstammt dem Kreise der Milawetscher Kultur“.

These statements remained unquestioned, and when H. Hencken³ produced his important article on Herzprung shields in 1950 he accepted that the Plzeň shield had been found in a hoard of bronzes, and that it therefore was of the greatest importance for dating. He could date notched shields in the east Mediterranean no earlier than the late 9th century, and because he did not believe that the Plzeň

¹ *The Danube in Prehistory* (1929) 345.

² *Zur Handelsgeschichte der germanischen Bronzezeit. Vorgesch. Forsch.* 7 (1930) 11. 17.

³ *Am. Journal of Arch.* 54, 1950, 303.

shield was the starting point for notched shields, he was forced to place part of Childe's period E as late as 800 B. C., to allow Mediterranean influence to inspire the north European notched shields.

Sprockhoff returned to this question in his classic paper⁴ on the relations between northern Europe and the Aegean and although he agreed with Hencken that the east Mediterranean notched shields were of the 8th century, he also pointed out that the Plzeň bronzes and the pottery vessel „können zeitlich nicht jünger sein als frühe oder ältere Urnenfelderkultur“. To this argument Hencken could do nothing but agree⁵.

In 1962 H. Müller-Karpe⁶ re-examined some of the evidence for relations in weapons between central Europe and Greece, and again pointed out that the east Mediterranean notched shields could scarcely be much older than the 8th century B. C. and that north European notched shields „gehören größtenteils annähernd derselben Zeit an“. He then went on to suggest a date for the Plzeň hoard in the 13th century. „Der Umstand, daß in Mitteleuropa ein ähnlicher Schild aus dem Bz D-zeitlichen, also etwa ins 13. Jahrhundert zu datierenden Depotfund von Pilsen . . . erheblich älter ist als die aus Griechenland bekannten Beispiele, hat vermuten lassen, daß diese Schildgruppe eine zentraleuropäische Heimat habe und die griechischen Stücke von der nördlichen Form abhängig seien“.

In the same year as Müller-Karpe wrote this paper, I brought together some of the evidence for European Bronze Age shields⁷. In examining all the documentary evidence for the preeminence of the central European notched shield style (U-notch) over the east Mediterranean style (V-notch), it seemed clear that the Plzeň association was the only evidence other than rather unconvincing typological comparisons which ultimately must have been based on the belief in the early date for the Plzeň shield. The find was made in the following way⁸: „Den Schild aus Bronze, der auf Taf. 1 und 2 abgebildet ist, fand man am 29. 9. 1896 beim Bau eines Hauses in Pilsen-Jikalka, in einer Entfernung von $\frac{1}{2}$ m von dem Ort, wo man in einer Sandschicht in 1,40 m Tiefe unter der Oberfläche schon am 23. 9. 1896 einen Hortfund in einem Gefäß gefunden hat. Den Schild samt anderen Gegenständen hat Baumeister Austera dem Historischen Museum in Pilsen gewidmet“.

We should examine this report carefully, and I want to make three comments upon it. First, it was general practice in the 19th century to claim associations for object found nearby one another, and there would not have been anyone at the site in Plzeň in 1896 who was competent to judge if these discoveries were in fact associated. Yet no one at the time did in fact claim that the shield and the hoard were truly associated, and the circumstances of discovery would have excluded certain judgment in any case. Second, it is more likely that the $\frac{1}{2}$ m distance between the two finds represents the distance between the edges of the finds; if so, the original centres of each find would have been nearly a metre apart. Third, I understand that the Plzeň museum authorities do not claim, nor ever did claim, that the shield was associated with the hoard, and they date the hoard to the centuries around 1200 B. C., and the shield to the 8th century. This is the date suggested in 1962 in Proc. Prehistoric Society.

⁴ Jahrb. RGZM. 1, 1954, 73 s.

⁵ Ibid., 74 note 86.

⁶ Germania 40, 1962, 277.

⁷ Proc. Prehist. Soc. 28, 1962, 162.

⁸ Quoted from Sbornik městského historického musea v Plzni 2, 1911, 96 in Jahrb. RGZM 1, 1954, 74.

Since this time, the Plzeň finds have been discussed on three occasions. O. Kytlicová⁹ has closely examined the hoard of bronzes and has used the hoard as the type-name for her Plzeň-Jikalka horizon. She does not discuss the shield in detail, except to dismiss it as a method of dating the hoard. „Die Zuständigkeit des Schildes, die eine frühe Datierung dieses Fundes veranlasste, ist weder sicher noch wahrscheinlich“.

Most recently, M. Gimbutas¹⁰ has included the Plzeň shield as illustration of the armour and weapons of her Urnfield I period, circa 1250–1100 B. C., and, following Müller-Karpe, has ascribed it to the hoard.

Also published in 1965 was a paper by M. Almagro¹¹ who accepted that the Plzeň shield was not associated with the hoard of bronzes. His conclusion was, “Nuestros sequimos creyendo, tras todos los análisis realizados, que desde el área geográfica del Mediterráneo Oriental llegó al Occidente este tipo de escudo con escotaduras en V y al Norte de Europa el de escotadura en U . . .”

In 1964 A. M. Snodgrass¹² had also decided that the problem of correlating the notched shields of the east Mediterranean with those of northern Europe was made simpler by the realization that the Plzeň shield was not a part of the hoard. His statement “. . . the homogeneity of the Pilsen hoard has been shown to be very suspect (in Proc. Preh. Soc.)” is however misleading because the hoard itself is authentic and not in doubt, and it is only the incorrect placing of the shield in the hoard that has caused difficulties.

I have attempted to show in this short paper that misinterpretation of the original report has led to the placing of the Plzeň notched shield in Bz D, with accompanying difficulty over the relationships of this style to the 8th century notched shields and shield representations of both the east and the west Mediterranean, and to the depiction of notched shields on the early 5th century Certosa situla. I do not suggest that shields were unknown in central Europe in the 13th century, or even before, and I have provided a few details of early examples in Proc. Prehistoric Society¹³; to these few, Gimbutas has added evidence of other probable shields, of early Urnfield date. These early shields were made of wood, perhaps with leather added, and had metal nails or studs with sometimes a beaten metal umbo or central piece. None have survived intact, but without doubt they would have been necessary during the period of intensive slashing sword production. The beaten metal shields did not serve as protection in any case, but were purely for parade and ceremony. This has been demonstrated by experiment¹⁴.

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⁹ Arch. Rozhledy 16, 1964, 555.

¹⁰ Bronze Age Cultures in Central and Eastern Europe (1965) 312.

¹¹ Bol. Asoc. Espanola de Orientalistas 1965, 96.

¹² Early Greek Armour and Weapons (1964) 228.

¹³ Proc. Prehist. Soc. 28, 1962, 171.

¹⁴ Ibid., 184; The Illustrated London News, 2 March 1963.