

## MIXTURA TEXTURALIS People and Textiles in the Carpathian Basin

VIKTÓRIA KISS – JUDIT P. SZEŐKE – BOGLÁRKA WEISZ

*On the 19<sup>th</sup> of April 2017 the Hungarian Academy of Sciences Research Centre for the Humanities Institute of Archaeology Lendület/Momentum Mobility Research Group and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences Research Centre for the Humanities Institute of History Lendület/Momentum Medieval Hungarian Economic History Research Group held a joint conference. The topic of the Lendület/Momentum research groups and its connection with the research on textile crafts was presented by the project leaders in their technical introduction. Since textile remains that are several hundred or several thousand years old have only survived to the present under special circumstances – in wet, possibly frozen ground, cut off from oxygen due to water, or conserved due to the presence of salts – with the exception of a few fortunate cases it is only possible to examine textile crafts from archaeological and historic periods in an indirect manner.*

The subject of the first four presentations of the conference was the introduction of research on relics discovered at archaeological excavations that can be linked to textile crafts from prehistory, the Roman period and the Early and Late Middle Ages. To this point it has only been possible to develop a profile of prehistoric, including Bronze Age, attire with the aid of small anthropomorphic statuettes and very little textile remains. On the surface of a few ceramic vessels found in eastern Hungarian settlements that were inhabited between 2000 and 1500 B.C., textile impressions from prior to firing can be seen, which according to the examinations up to now were made from vegetal matter and show evidence of textiles made using techniques from the weaving of wattle, corn husks and baskets. The archaeological finds from the Roman Period textile cleaning and repair shop introduced in the second presentation is unique in its own way; it is the only place where the inscribed lead tags to identify the textiles and clothing brought in by the clients have been found together with the implements used during the work processes in the original context for their use. The Savaria workshop again reminds us that these textiles, which were produced through an investment of enormous work, represented significant value in the period before the Industrial Revolution; they were used for a long time, their faults were repaired and their fading colors were refreshed. In addition to the exhibition of the find materials, the presentation drew attention to the clothes depicted on Pannonian gravestones as well as the possibilities for interpretation and the differences between the pieces of clothing that had become worn through everyday use and were brought in to this workshop specializing in revitalizing them, as indicated on the over 1,000 lead tags. Various groups (Huns, Germans, Avars and Hungarians)



### MIXTURA TEXTURALIS

Ember és textil a Kárpát-medencében

Az MTA BTK RI Lendület Mobilitás kutatócsoport és az MTA BTK TTI Középkori Magyar Gazdaságtörténet Kutatócsoport közös konferenciája

Helyszín: MTA Humán Tudományok Kutatóháza, B épület 5. emelet, Tanács terem

Dátum: 2017. április 18.

10.00–10.10 Megnyitó  
Fodor Pál, az MTA BTK főigazgatója

10.10–10.30 Szakmai bevezető  
Kiss Viktória – Weisz Boglárka

10.30–11.00 Pásztokei-Szeőke Judit – Kiss Viktória – Kulcsár Gabriella – Szathmári Ildikó:  
*Agyagba zárt textilök: eszközök, lenyomatok és textiltulajdonságok a Kr. e. 2. évezredben*

11.00–11.30 Pásztokei-Szeőke Judit – Ivan Radman-Livaja: *Rómaiaké szennyese: ruhajavító- és tisztító műhelyek bogatitka a római kori Pannoniából*

11.30–12.00 Bollók Ádám – Masek Zsófia – Merva Szabina – Miháczai-Páli Anett: *A Kárpát-medencei kora középkori textilletek kutatása – helyszínről*

12.00–12.30 Morlovin Maxim: *Textilről textil nélkül: úmoplombák és értékelésük a középkori textiltulajdonság vonatkozásban*

12.30–12.40 Kérdések

12.40–13.10 Ebédszünnet

13.10–13.40 Békési-Gardánfalvi Magdolna – Várfalvi Andrea: *Régészeti textilek színművelésének okai és színelőállításuk korlátai*

13.40–14.10 Skorka Renáta: *A szövőipar ragadozói*

14.10–14.40 Majorossy Judit: *Posztóosok társadalomtörténete és -topográfiája a késő középkorban*

14.40–15.10 Weisz Boglárka: *A textil „útján”*

15.10–16.00 Kérdések, műhelybeszélgetés



arriving in the migrations to the Carpathian Basin from several directions in the Early Middle Ages brought their textile-making traditions and attire to the territory of our country. Through the examination of textile workshops, textile remains preserved through corrosion on metal objects (e.g. jewelry) and depictions (e.g. Byzantine mosaics) in this exciting period it is possible to make conclusions about the textiles of various materials (e.g. silk) and with various woven structures. In the excavations uncovering cities and market towns of the later Middle Ages in recent decades, primarily through the expert use of metal detecting equipment, lead seals have been discovered that attest to the origins of textiles arriving from western European workshops. The analysis of the great number of finds in this group contributes to the charting of the wide-ranging system of economic and commercial links with medieval Hungary.

## Kézműves specializáció mértéke

### Textilművesség vizsgálata

- a textilművesség emlékeinek kutatása – megmaradás kérdése (tóparti telepek, Hallstatt, korrózió)
- lenyomatok
- növényi és állati eredetű anyagok
- településeken belül a textilművesség emlékeinek kutatása: nehezekek, eszközök
- archeozoológia, archeobotanika
- kísérleti régészet



During the other three presentations we were primarily able to become familiar with the profile of medieval economic and social history outlined in historical sources. The weaving industry, which is considered by economic historians as the most important branch of medieval industry, also stood in a high position in the hierarchy of handcraft activities according to medieval assessments. The process of producing the completed cloth – the preparation for weaving, the process of weaving and the finishing of the cloth itself – provided a living for representatives of numerous crafts. The work of masters employed in the weaving industry was connected in a chain of activities that built upon one another. The masters performing the final phases of finishing the cloth at the end of the process (linen bleachers, fabric dyers and cloth shearers) became the greatest beneficiaries of the textile industry, since it was in their workshops that the cloth was completed and could be put on the market at great profit. Therefore, in the Late Middle Ages the distinction between cloth cutters and cloth merchants blurred. Cloth cutting and cloth trading were



activities that were strongly overseen by town leadership (they prohibited cutting in closed – non-visible – areas and placed local measuring rods in public spaces such as the exterior walls of churches or the town hall). In part this is also related to the fact that in numerous towns the streets of the cloth cutters and/or cloth merchants were found near the town hall in the Middle Ages (e.g. in Vienna, Wiener Neustadt and Buda). In every medieval town – independent of whether it was a center of the textile industry or not – the masters of cloth production or the cloth trade as well as the craftsmen performing fabric processing (tailors, milliners, bonnet makers and pillow makers) were always present. At the conference we were able to become familiar with these social groups in the city of Bratislava, their social and topographic status and the regulation of their activities. The central role of foreign textiles amongst the country's commercial goods through markets and storehouses is also clearly shown by the fact that they were regularly used as currency in the Middle Ages. It was not only wages, commercial goods, real estate and fines that were paid off in textiles instead of money, but the annual tribute due to the king had to be paid in part in cloth. The rulers themselves also took advantage of this opportunity to grant various allocations from the royal proceeds in textiles instead of money (from thirtieth customs or treasury income).

The final presentation of the conference summarized the experiences related to the restoration of textile remains with particular attention to the identification of former pigments. The restoration experts, archaeologists and historians in attendance at the conference made an exciting exchange of knowledge possible. According to the intention of the organizers, the discussion of the mutual interests of the representatives of various branches of the humanities and the experts in materials science will inspire further similarly interdisciplinary gatherings in the future.