

## QUESTION OF HEADLESS FIGURES ON BRONZE AGE URNS<sup>1</sup>

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*The simplest method of decorating ceramic vessels is incising the surface. Extremely diverse patterns can be created from dots and lines. These sometimes seem to be just simple decorations, while other times one may imagine that human and animal figures can be recognized within the design. Mysterious headless figures often appear on Early Bronze Age vessels, but two recent finds from Kisapostag may alter our current interpretations.*

### RESULTS UP TO THE PRESENT

Researchers into the Nagyrév culture<sup>3</sup> are quite familiar with the vessels found at Nagyrév<sup>4</sup> and Százhalombatta-Földvár,<sup>5</sup> on which human figures encircle an object that is difficult to interpret. Rózsa Schreiber identified the latter as the base of a shrine, and the seemingly headless people are holding their arms up high.<sup>6</sup> According to Magdolna Vicze the V-shaped motif is not an organic part of the figures, or in other words only the headless upper torso of the figures were depicted. The latter interpretation conforms with Rózsa Schreiber's hypothesis related to a vessel from Dunapentele;<sup>7</sup> here also<sup>8</sup> we see headless figures that are connected to buildings – but she also mentions that the entire scene is similar to seated or squatting figures.<sup>9</sup>

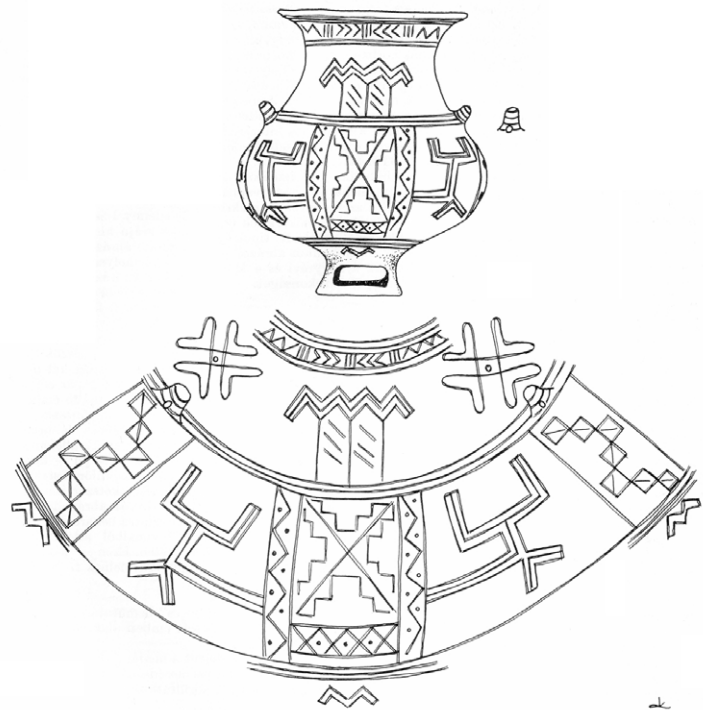


Fig. 1: The Nagyrév hanging vessel and its decoration  
(from: Schreiber 1984, Fig. 7, 1a–b)

<sup>1</sup> Here I would also like to give my thanks to the restoration experts Rita Késmárky (grave drawings and restoration) and Gabriella Haraszi (restoration and drawings of incised motifs). The photographs of the excavation and objects were made by the author.

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<sup>3</sup> Nagyrév culture (ca. BC 2500–2000) spanned along the shores of the rivers Danube and Tisza and in the Great Plains. Forenbauer, Staso: Radiocarbon Dates and Absolute Chronology of the Central European Early Bronze Age. *Antiquity* 67 (1993), 218–220, 235–256.

<sup>4</sup> Tompa, Ferenc: 25 Jahre Urgeschichtsforschung in Ungarn 1912–1936. *Bericht der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission* 24–25 (1934–1935), 27–127. Taf. 23, 5; Patay, Pál: *Korai bronzkori kultúrák Magyarországon (Early Bronze Age Cultures in Hungary)*. Dissertationes Pannonicae II, 13. (Budapest: Királyi Magyar Pázmány Péter Tudományegyetem Érem- és Régiségtani Intézete 1938), table V, Fig. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Vicze, Magdolna: Nagyrév symbolism revisited: Three decorated vessels from Százhalombatta and Dunaújváros. *Tisicum. A Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok Megyei Múzeumok Évkönyve* XIX (2009), 309–318, Fig. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Schreiber, Rózsa: Szimbolikus ábrázolások korabronzkori edényeken (Symbolic Representations on Early Bronze Age Vessels). *Symbolische Darstellungen an frühbronzezeitlichen Gefäßen. Archaeológiai Értesítő* 111 (1984), 3–28.

<sup>7</sup> The current name of the city is Dunaújváros.

<sup>8</sup> Patay 1938, IV. 5.

<sup>9</sup> Schreiber 1984, 12, 20, 22, Fig. 10.

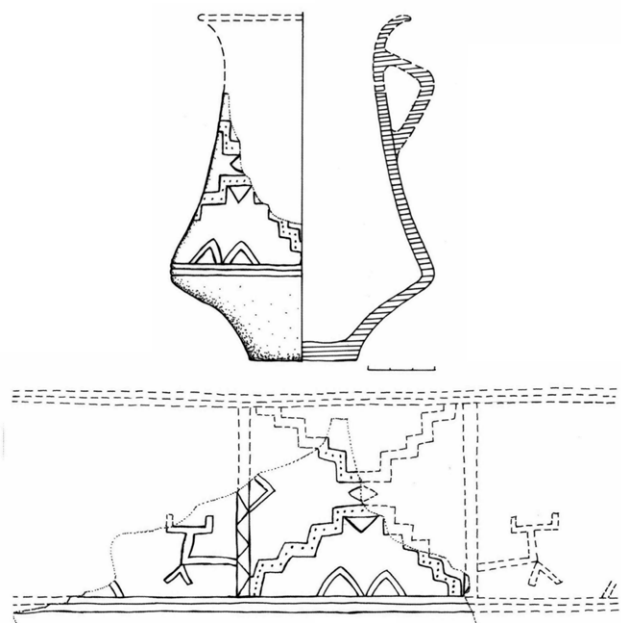


Fig. 2: The Százhalombatta-Földvár vessel and its decoration (from: Vicze 2009, Fig. 3)

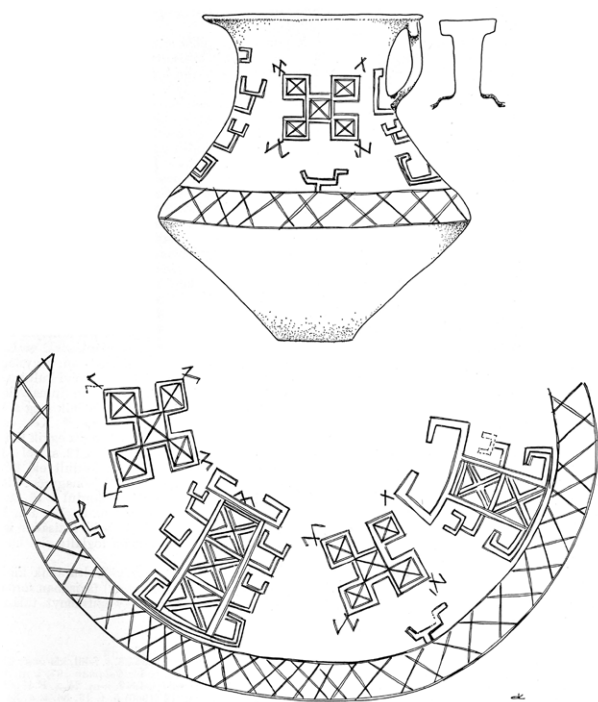


Fig. 3: The Dunapentele vessel and its decoration (from: Schreiber 1984, Fig. 10)

2) Rózsa Schreiber is probably correct in that these are anthropomorphic figures. In the figures from Nagyrév and Százhalombatta nothing suggests that these might be supernatural creatures. In the case of the Kisapostag urn the tubular extension could also be interpreted as the head of a bird-like creature. In this case, they might be hybrid creatures or people wearing masks.

## A NEW FIND AND A NEW OPINION

In 2004 we excavated a new section of a Bronze Age cemetery in Kisapostag that has been known of for a long time. We found a version of a familiar scene on the urn from grave 38 that differs from the earlier examples in minor details. This provided the opportunity to examine the previous hypotheses and to formulate new ones.

If we interpret the decoration of the other two vessels on the basis of the new find – and if we really have pictorial representations of human figures – then the heads are depicted, even if only being indicated by simple extending lines in general. In this way the body parts of the figures connected to the building make sense as well, since even though the limbs coming out from around the area of the legs could be explained, it seems more likely that the two figures are placing their hands on some building or other object. The heads of the figures on the Kisapostag vessel are facing up, while on the other two the legs are facing up. Rózsa Schreiber brings up several examples where figures turned with their heads facing down are found on the vessels of the Nagyrév culture.

## WHO AND WHAT ARE THEY?

During the interpretation of the scene, we are essentially searching for the answer to four questions: 1) what is the central object, 2) who are the two figures, 3) what are they doing, and 4) why are they doing it? A clear, final answer cannot be given to any of these questions.

1) Rózsa Schreiber's interpretation has already been mentioned. The reading of the central motif as a building is problematic, as it can be linked much more closely to the decoration of the urn from Tököl or the vessels from Dévaványa or Tószeg.

Two conclusions present themselves: a) the two figures are not necessarily surrounding the same object, or b) if we presume that the central motif depicts the same object on all of the vessels, then it seems most likely that it is some kind of woven fabric whose pattern is not the same on the separate depictions.



Fig. 4: The urn from grave 38 at Kisapostag

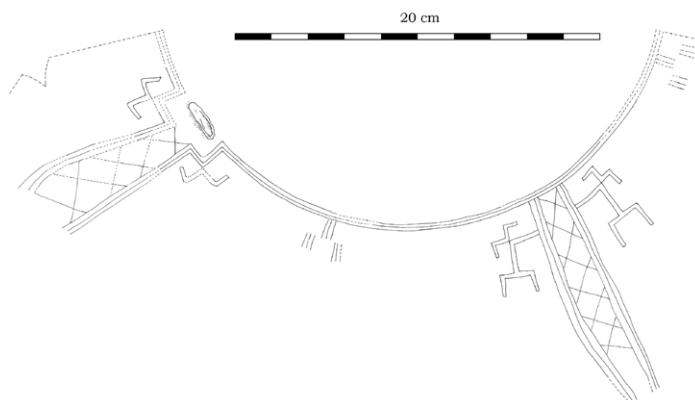


Fig. 5: Flat representation of the decoration of urn 38

Since they regularly are found in pairs, the possibility arises that they embody the twin motif.<sup>10</sup> Twins play an important role in the creation stories of numerous peoples – their function is in general to explain the joint origins of two groups that have a close cultural connection.

3–4) Rózsa Schreiber separates the Nagyrév vessel from the group of depictions that record some kind of a story or ritual scene. I lean towards accepting the hypothesis that the Nagyrév, Százhalombatta and Kisapostag scenes are also telling the story of some event or action – independent of whether this is an everyday event or an action that occurred in the mystical past, or possibly the ritual replication of this action.<sup>11</sup> It is not difficult to find parallels to the main elements of this consistent depiction (two figures placing hands on a building or some other object that cannot be identified).

a) The placing of hands on some object or building may express taking possession of it or the consecration of the given object.<sup>12</sup>

b) On the basis of the placement of the figures and the central, textile-like element, it could be associated with a weaving scene. However, certain details, or more precisely the absence of these details, make this

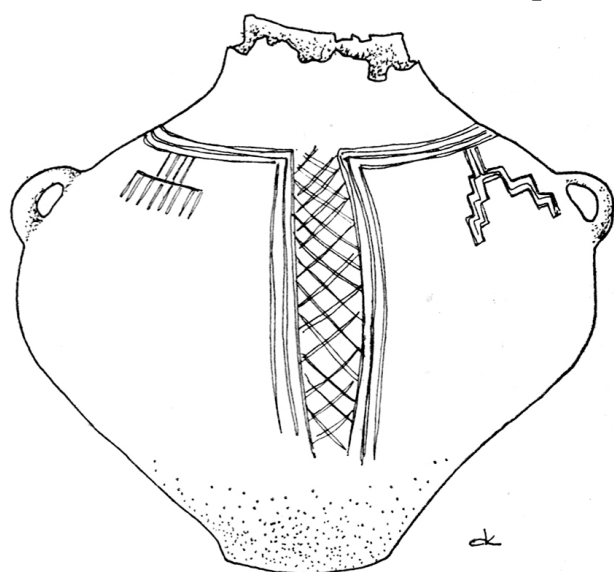


Fig. 6: The urn from Tököl  
(from: Schreiber 1984, Fig. 8, 5)

<sup>10</sup> For Bronze Age depictions that can be interpreted as twins, see: Kristiansen, Kristian – Larsson, Thomas B.: *The Rise of Bronze Age Society. Travels, Transmission and Transformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 258–319; Kristiansen, Kristian: *Bridging India and Scandinavia: Institutional Transmission and Elite Conquest during the Bronze Age*. In: *Interweaving Worlds: Systemic Interactions in Eurasia, 7<sup>th</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> Millennium BC*, eds. Wilkonson, Toby C. – Sherratt, Susan – Bennet, John (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2011), 243–265.

<sup>11</sup> A similar scene is also found on an Iron Age Italian house-shaped urn, although on this the hands of the figures do not touch the central geometric element: Forsythe, Gary: *A critical history of early Rome: from prehistory to the first Punic War* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 2005), Fig. 2. The (same?) two figures are portrayed on the other side of the urn – perhaps it is the depiction of different scenes from the same series of events.

<sup>12</sup> A parallel to the latter is the Roman *consecratio* ceremony, during which the placement of the hands on the doorjamb plays an important role: Wissowa, Georg: *Consecratio*. In: *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft. Neue Bearbeitung*. Hrsg. von Georg Wissowa. IV, 1 (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler'sche Buchhandlung, 1900), 896–902.





Fig. 7: The urn from grave 100 at Kisapostag

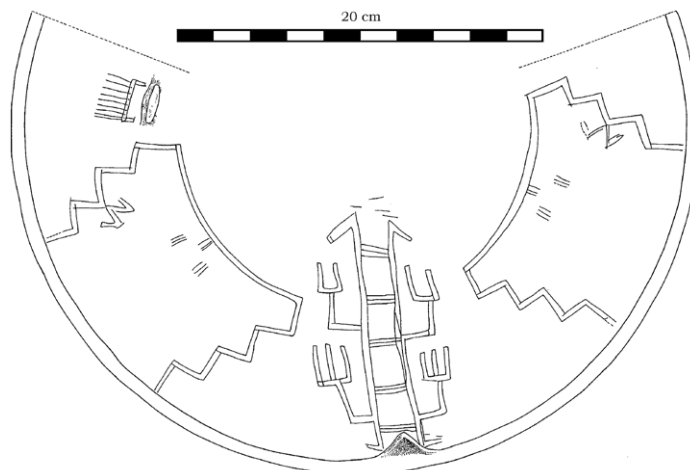


Fig. 8: Flat representation of the decoration of urn 100

difficulty is that weaving is characteristically women's work and the figures portrayed lack any sexual characteristics or clear gender identifiers, whereas in other periods and locations these can be rather easily identified.<sup>14</sup>

c) The positioning of the hands and legs of the figures also make it conceivable that what is recorded is a scene of a special type of dance, some kind of dance with an object.<sup>15</sup> In this case there would be an explanation for why the textile-like objects between the two figures are different on the individual vessels – it is only important to indicate the fabric, while the actual pattern is secondary. The difficulty with this explanation though, is the significant shift in proportions at the expense of the human figures.

### STRINGS THAT TIE

At the same time, the Nagyrev, Százhalombatta and Kisapostag motifs also indicate the range of communication between the communities from which the ceramic arts of the Nagyrev culture arose. This was not restricted to the short-distance link between neighboring communities – which by itself would provide an explanation for the development and maintenance of a uniform style of ceramics – but also directly ties together the two most important areas for the culture, the settlements along the Danube and Tisza rivers. At least this is suggested by the similar iconography found alongside the two rivers, which presently is not attested to in the intervening areas. The nature of this contact is, however, unknown. One must consider

<sup>13</sup> For counterexamples see: Barber, Elizabeth. J. Wayland: *Prehistoric Textiles. The Development of Cloth in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages with Special Reference to the Aegean* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

<sup>14</sup> See the previous footnote. The skirt quite clearly indicates gender in the Bronze Age Carpathian Basin as well: Kovács, Tibor: *Bronzkori harangszoknyás szobrok a Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum gyűjteményében. Bronze Age bell-skirted statuettes in the collection of the Hungarian National Museum. Archaeologiai Értesítő* 99 (1972), 47–51; Kovács, Tibor: *The Bronze Age in Hungary* (Budapest: Corvina, 1977), Fig. 24a; Schumacher-Matthäus, Gisela: *Studien zu bronzzeitlichen Schmucktrachten im Karpatenbecken: ein Beitrag zur Deutung der Hortfunde im Karpatenbecken. Marburger Studien zur Vor- und Frühgeschichte*, 6. (Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern, 1985), Taf. 1–16; Holenweger, Erika: *Die anthropomorphe Tonplastik der Mittel und Spätbronzezeit im mittel- bis unterdanubischen Gebiet. Eine Untersuchung zu ägäischen Traditionen und ihrer Verbreitung an der unteren Donau*. Dissertation zur Erlangung des akademischen Grades eines Doktors der Philosophie der Philosophischen Fakultäten der Universität des Saarlandes (Saarbrücken: 2011). Viewed on January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

<sup>15</sup> Garfinkel, Yosef: *Dancing at the dawn of agriculture* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 28–34, 38–39, Fig. 2.9.



Fig. 9: Scandinavian petroglyphs  
(from: Kritiansen–Larsson 2005, Fig. 106)



Fig. 10: Grave 38 from the north

several possibilities: the flow of information between the people who made the vessels, the mobility of the people who made the vessels and of the vessels themselves or some combination of these factors. Assuming that in the Nagyrév culture the vessels were also typically made by women, the issue of exogamy arises, or rather from what distance the men of the particular communities found wives for themselves.<sup>16</sup>

### SITTING BULL?

The headless people of the Dunapentele vessel may be suspicious on the basis of the foregoing. The urn from grave 100 in Kisapostag provides grounds for this suspicion.

Due to their location on the Kisapostag urn the two appendages bent at nearly a right angle can be distinctly interpreted as legs. The “three fingered” central pair of limbs cannot be considered a stylized human figure if we also consider the upper pair to be so; the two appendages on the head of the figure may symbolize horns – just as in the case of the figures on the Dunaújváros vessel.<sup>17</sup> Amongst the three pairs of limbs, the lower ones differ fundamentally from the upper ones – clearly reflecting the differences between legs and arms characteristic of humans.<sup>18</sup> This suggests that we are dealing with anthropoid creatures, but not humans. In the case of the creature from Dunaújváros with two pairs of limbs, the horns probably did not belong to a person wearing a mask, but instead some kind of supernatural creature.<sup>19</sup>

In addition to the similarities in the figures, the compositional principle is also similar; the band created

<sup>16</sup> Rogers, Rhea J.: Tribes as Heterarchy: A Case Study from the Prehistoric Southeastern United States. *Archeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association Special Issue: Heterarchy and the Analysis of Complex Sciences*. Volume 6, Issue 1. 1995, 7–16.

<sup>17</sup> Of course it is also possible that they might have depicted a building “adorned” with horns. The custom of attaching skulls of a horned animals to houses was already widespread in the Neolithic Period in the Carpathian Basin (Kalicz, Nándor: *Götter aus Ton* [Budapest: Corvina, 1970], Abb. 8), and we also encounter it in the Bronze Age (Hoti, Marina: Novi nalazi konsekrativnih rogova na Vučedolu. New Finds of the Horns of Consecration at Vučedol. *Opuscula archaeologica* 14 [1990] 33–48, Pl. 3, 1–2).

<sup>18</sup> The figure with a tripartite body and three pairs of limbs could also be the depiction of an insect, and there are examples of this with arachnids at Göbekli Tepe (c.f. Schmidt, Klaus: Göbekli Tepe – the Stone Age Sanctuaries. New results of ongoing excavations with a special focus on sculptures and high reliefs. *Documenta Praehistorica* XXXVII [2010] 239–256, Fig. 10; Hodder, Ian-Meskell, Lynn: The symbolism of Çatalhöyük in its regional context. In: *Religion in the emergence of civilization: Çatalhöyük as a case study*, ed. Ian Hodder [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010], 32–72, Fig. 2.4, 2.6). This, however, seems to be refuted by the differing formation of the legs and arms and the similar figure that instead has two pairs of limbs on the urn from Dunaújváros. So we might be dealing with mythological creatures that have horns, as well as one or two pairs of arms.

<sup>19</sup> Analogies to the depiction of the legs of the Dunaújváros creatures are also known in a Middle Eastern Neolithic context (Garfinkel 2003, 291–295, Fig. 7.3:b, 12.12:g, 13.2–3). These figures have also been identified as supernatural creatures (Garfinkel 2003, 295). The unusual positioning of the legs – despite the fact that there is no historical link between the depictions from Dunaújváros and the Middle East – perhaps supports the prior hypothesis in the case of the Bronze Age work.





Fig. 11: Grave 100 from the north

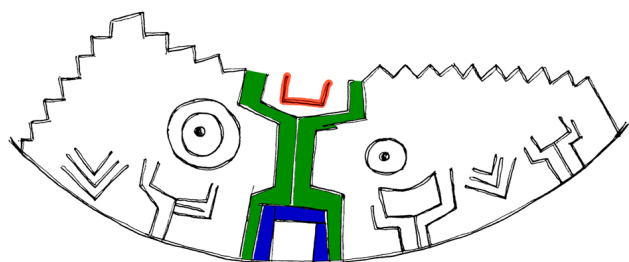


Fig. 12: The Budapest-Pannonhalmi út vessel's "main scene" with explanatory coloration (from: Schreiber 1984, Fig. 4)

grave having been disturbed by an animal either, so there is only one explanation for the missing handle, it was no longer attached when it was placed in the grave. From this it can be concluded that the vessel had been damaged earlier, during use.<sup>22</sup> Thus, we are talking about a personal belonging that only after its life-cycle – the length of which cannot be determined – became an urn.<sup>23</sup>

by incision and filled with cross-hatching at the midsection of the vessel represents the bottom edge of the picture field. At the junction of the vessel's shoulder and mouth the surface used for the composition is open. The explanation for this may be that the bottom edge symbolizes the ground, while the illustration is open towards the top, in the direction of the sky.

The triangular extension of the Kisapostag vessel's lattice frame and its odd location between the two legs of the main figure may relate to the peculiar nature of the figures. Its form and central placement make it similar to the *omphalion*, the navel of the Earth.<sup>20</sup> Figures seated upon conical objects are known from later Scandinavian petroglyphs.<sup>21</sup>

### VESSEL WITHOUT HANDLES

The upper section of urn 100 was crushed by the weight of the earth and broken into pieces, but every piece was found except for the handle. During the excavation the pieces of the vessel's neck were lying closely atop the shoulder. Their location rules out the possibility that a plow could have pulled the handle out of the grave. It is also unlikely that the missing piece could have come off without damaging the splayed edge. There was no evidence of the

<sup>20</sup> Fauth, Wolfgang: Omphalos. In: *Der Kleine Pauly. Lexikon der Antike auf der Grundlage von Pauly's Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft unter Mitwirkung zahlreicher Fachgelehrter bearbeitet und herausgegeben von Konrat Ziegler und Walther Sontheimer*. Band 4. (Stuttgart: Druckenmüller, 1972), 299–300.

<sup>21</sup> Kritiansen–Larsson 2005, Fig. 106.

<sup>22</sup> I do not consider it possible that the vessel was broken during the burial ritual. To my knowledge no one has yet observed the handle of an urn being broken off in the cemeteries of the Nagyrév and Vatyá cultures, and the fragmentation in other cultures is of a different nature.

<sup>23</sup> According to the individual observations related to the dichotomy of grave ceramics and settlement ceramics, vessels placed in the grave were produced exclusively for the burials: Bóna, István: The cemeteries of the Nagyrév culture. *Alba Regia* II–III (1963), 11–23; Csányi Marietta: A nagyrévi kultúra leletei a Közép-Tiszavidékről. Finds of the Nagyrév Culture in the Middle Tisza Region. *Szolnok Megyei Múzeumi Évkönyv 1982–83* (1983), 33–65. In contrast to this, Rózsa Schreiber hypothesizes about the small jug from grave 21 of the Szigetszentmiklós-Felsőtag cemetery that it was placed in the grave in a damaged state, missing its handle: Kalicz-Schreiber, Rózsa: *Bronzkori urnatemető Szigetszentmiklós határában (Bronze Age Urn Cemetery on the Outskirts of Szigetszentmiklós)*. Ráckevei Múzeumi Füzetek 2. (Ráckeve: Árpád Museum, 1995), 9.

## FACING TOWARDS THE NORTH

Finally, the placement of the two urns in the graves must be mentioned. The orientation of inhumation and scattered ash graves can be clearly recognized. The possibility cannot be discounted that a similar phenomenon can be found with urn burials as well.

Urn number 38 was placed in the grave pit in such a way that the main motif with the two figures was oriented to the north-northeast. In the case of urn number 100 the horned figure was turned almost precisely to the north. Thus, the mythological creatures in both cases face the “darkest” direction. The main motif of the urn from grave 61 at Rákóczihalom faced the east.<sup>24</sup> The small set of data and their partially differing nature makes it impossible to definitively establish at this point whether we can consider that the urns were consciously oriented in the grave or whether there were multiple variations (regional and/or chronological) on this within the territory of the culture.

## ANOTHER SUSPICIOUS CASE OF MISSING HEADS

If the figures from Dunaújváros and Kisapostag genuinely have horns it gives us an opportunity to provide an alternative proposal for the interpretation of the central figures of the Budapest-Pannonhalmi út vessel.<sup>25</sup> According to Rózsa Schreiber these are also headless figures, but there is a crampon-shaped motif that is not directly attached to the body, which could also be interpreted as a set of horns. According to Rózsa Schreiber these patterns made of three lines each make up the body, or more precisely the arm section.

The hypothesis that the central figure has horns is in harmony with Rózsa Schreiber’s conception, according to which it is some kind of supernatural creature.<sup>26</sup> Horns were an attribute of the gods in the Middle East, and people wore them if they wanted to signal their divine nature.<sup>27</sup> This idea either spread to Europe as well, or a similar concept developed independent of the Middle Eastern phenomenon.<sup>28</sup> The latter possibility is raised by the creatures with horns or antlers in Palaeolithic cave art,<sup>29</sup> or by the Mesolithic burial from Bad Dürrenberg.<sup>30</sup> Of course the continuity stretching over several millennia cannot be proven; it is conceivable that similar ideas may have developed independent of one another during the various phases of European prehistory. The fact that the figures were only portrayed with horns, that is without a head to hold them, clearly did not pose a problem to the Bronze Age people.<sup>31</sup>

If the figure has horns, then its arms were drawn using just two lines, not three. On the basis of representative logic, something similar can be expected for the legs as well; they also are made of two lines, and

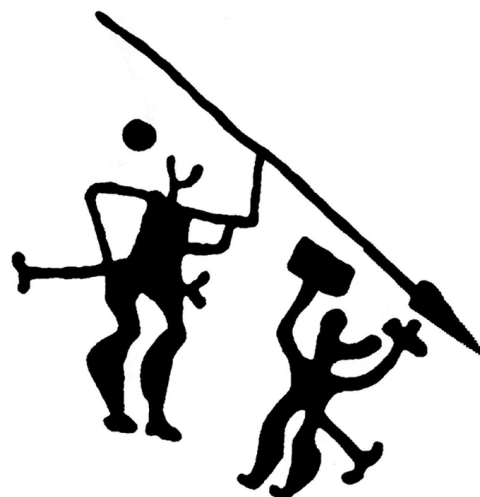


Fig. 13: Human figures with horns (from: Kristiansen–Larsson 2005, Fig. 154)

<sup>24</sup> Csányi 1983, 34.

<sup>25</sup> Schreiber 1984, 14, 16, figs. 2–4.

<sup>26</sup> Schreiber 1984, 16.

<sup>27</sup> Boehmer, Rainer Michael: Hörnerkrone. In: *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie*. Band 4. (Berlin–New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1972–1975), 431–434.

<sup>28</sup> Kristiansen–Larsson 2005, Fig. 155, 1, 4, 5.

<sup>29</sup> Arnold, Bettina-Counts, Derek, B.: Prolegomenon: The Many Masks of the Master of Animals. In: *The Master of Animals in Old World Iconography*, eds. Arnold, Bettina – Counts, Derek, B. (Budapest: Archaeolingua Alapítvány, 2010), 9–24.

<sup>30</sup> Hansen, Svend: *Archaeological Finds from Germany. Booklet to the Photographic Exhibition* (Berlin: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, 2010), 20–21.

<sup>31</sup> Kristiansen–Larsson 2005, Fig. 154.



Fig. 14: Impression of the Tell Asmar seal, circa 2750–2600 B.C. (from: Frankfort, Henri: *Oriental Institute Discoveries in Iraq, 1933/34. Fourth Preliminary Report of the Iraq Expedition. Oriental Institute Publication 19* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1935], Fig. 30)



Fig. 15: Seal from Bactria, second half of the 3rd millennium B.C. (from: Sarianidi, Victor: *Myths of Ancient Bactria and Margiana on Its Seals and Amulets* [Moscow: Pentagraphics], 1998. Cat. 26)

a vertical line along the backbone splits the entire body into two symmetrical halves. This principle of representation can be observed in a few of the “supporting characters” that have been identified as headless and legless people; the presumed arms are made up of two lines and the body is split into two halves with a vertical line.

However, the three lines between the two legs are in need of an explanation. These can be interpreted as some object to sit on. The latter has been used to emphasize a figure’s supernatural nature since the Neolithic Period,<sup>32</sup> and is common in the case of idols from the Cycladic culture as well.<sup>33</sup> We have data starting from the Middle Bronze Age in the Carpathian Basin of chairs with legs and backs,<sup>34</sup> and recently the Bronze Age find from Hasfalva has also been interpreted as a throne.<sup>35</sup>

Lastly, a final question: what might the zig-zags originating from the hands of the central figures symbolize? According to Rózsa Schreiber it is water, which can be easily imagined due to the great abstraction. At the same time, deities depicted with horns or antlers and holding snakes in their hands have been known since the Bronze Age in Europe – and the zig-zag line may also serve to indicate this. Horned figures holding snakes in their hands also appear frequently in the Middle East, which raises the interesting issue of the origin of this depiction.

### THE PURPOSE AND ROLE IN INDICATING STATUS OF VESSELS WITH SYMBOLIC DECORATIONS

Magdolna Vicze believes that the motifs transformed these everyday objects into exceptional vessels, and at the same time indicated the special role of their users. Perhaps the objects belonged to a specific, defined social group that had exclusive access to these objects or to the rituals in which they were used, and furthermore it is conceivable that these rights and special roles were hereditary.<sup>36</sup>

Naturally, it is certain that in the communities of the Nagyrév culture – as generally in human communities – there were religious specialists. It is less certain whether these vessels with symbolic representations can be linked exclusively to these people, or to some other group that played a prominent role.

The form of the vessels in question is rather variable (hanging vessels, jars, goblets, storage vessels/urns), or in other words they cannot be considered a special accessory for a specific ritual act. There are examples that lost their handles during the course of use, and probably

<sup>32</sup> See the “god” with a sickle from Szegvár-Tüzköves and the “Venus” figures from Kókénydomb: Kalicz 1970, Pl. 32–37.

<sup>33</sup> Dickinson, Oliver: *The Aegean Bronze Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), Pl. 5.17.

<sup>34</sup> Kiss, Viktória: Contacts along the Danube: A Boat Model from the Early Bronze Age. In: *Between the Aegean and Baltic Seas. Prehistory across Borders*. Aegaeum 27, eds. Galanaki, Ioanna – Tomas, Helene – Galanakis, Yannis – Laffineur, Robert (Liège-Austin: Peeters Publishers & Booksellers, 2007), 119–129.

<sup>35</sup> Kristiansen–Larsson 2005, 202–204, Fig. 90a.

<sup>36</sup> Vicze 2009, 312–314.



only secondarily became grave furnishings.<sup>37</sup> In addition, grave 100 from Kisapostag is decidedly modest. Here only the “obligatory” objects were placed alongside the deceased, it contained no other vessels or bronze objects besides the jug and the dish. The situation is similar for grave 38, where the lack of metal objects is highlighted by the abundance of metal found in grave 39 alongside it, where we found objects and object fragments that can be categorized to six different types. Therefore, for the time being the grave goods besides the urns do not support the hypothesis that the deceased played a special role – by any definition – in the society. The locations of the graves do not suggest they were special individuals either; they all blend into a row of graves characteristic of larger cemeteries.

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<sup>37</sup> However, naturally we do not know whether their original “everyday” function was sacred or profane.