

RECONSTRUCTING THE BATTLE OF MUHI AND THE MONGOL INVASION OF HUNGARY IN 1241: New Archaeological and Historical Approaches

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The Battle of Muhi, fought between the Hungarian Kingdom and the Mongols in April, 1241, is not simply a crucial episode in Hungarian history, but rather it occupies a position of pan-Eurasian historical significance. Since the events have this position of importance for global history, it is therefore crucial that serious efforts are made to offer a reliable historical reconstruction of not only the battle itself, but also the short and long-term impact of the related Mongol invasion and occupation of Hungary. Recent archaeological finds and innovative historical interpretations now offer a complex, multidisciplinary approach which can be the basis of a new large-scale research project. Thus, what we are proposing here is a project aimed at improving our understanding of the episode and of its broader historical context through a fuller analysis of the surviving textual records and the most recent archaeological findings.

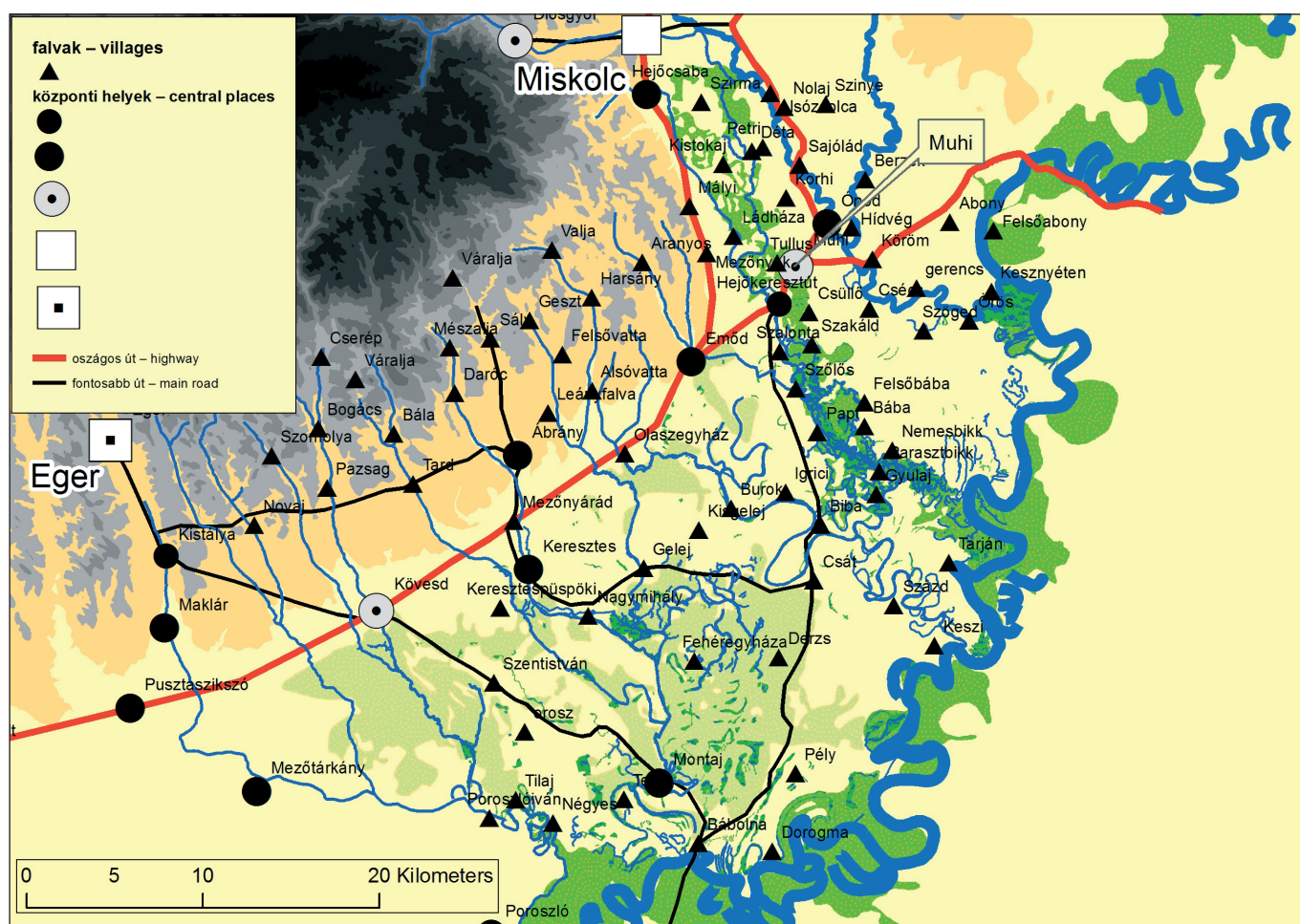


Figure 1: Reconstruction of the medieval road and settlement network in the vicinity of the Muhi battle site

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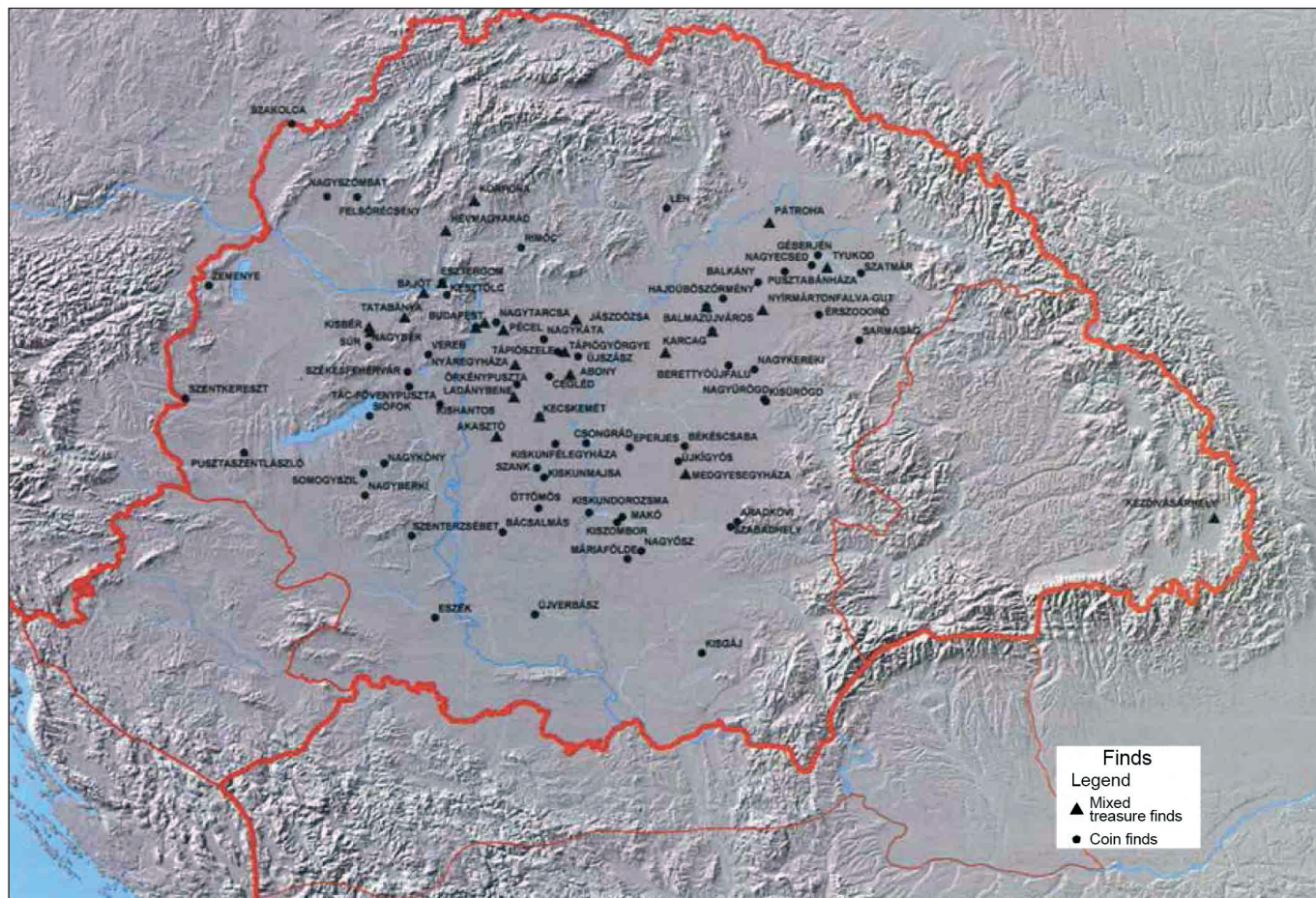


Figure 2: The distribution of coin hoard finds, hidden during the period of the Mongol invasion (from Csaba Tóth’s study based on the catalog of the *Tatárjárás* exhibition held at the Hungarian National Museum in 2007)

The Battle of Muhi (in medieval sources the nearby settlement was called Mohi) was one of the most important events in a decades-long historical process which saw the Mongol Empire occupy Central Asia, defeat the Russian principalities, and drive into the region of Central-Europe, attacking Hungary and the duchies of Poland. That the battle was significant is evinced by the wide and disparate range of sources, European and non-European, which record aspects of it. As an example, the Persian official and historian in the employ of the Mongols, Juvaini, described it as “one of their greatest deeds and their fiercest battles.”⁴ It also appears to be the only battle fought on European soil for which we have a descriptive medieval Chinese account – namely, that found in Sübe’etei’s biographies in the *Yuan Shi*, the official history of the Mongol Yuan Dynasty.⁵

Hungarian historical research has been dealing with the Mongol Invasion of Hungary and its defining battle for more than a century, and major efforts at its reconstruction have been made (*fig. 1*), while most of the local and foreign sources have been collected and translated to Hungarian. The underlying aim is to produce a harmonized account from the disparate sources of information, and there have been important moves in this direction in roughly the last decade. Balázs Nagy’s (2003) significant volume, *Tatárjárás. Nemzet és emlékezet* (Mongol Invasion. Nation and Memory) represented a very useful compilation and translation of the important primary sources on the invasion, along with the historiography of the period and selected up-to-date scholarly views.⁶ This volume also contained an article by József Laszlovszky, ex-

⁴ J. Boyle (trans), *Ala al-Din Ata Malik Juvaini, The History of the World Conqueror* (Cambridge, 1958), 271.

⁵ Song Lian 宋濂. *Yuan Shi* 元史 [History of the Yuan Dynasty], juan 121, 122 (Beijing: Zhong Hua Book Company, 1976), 2978, 3009.

⁶ Balázs Nagy (ed.), *Tatárjárás. Nemzet és emlékezet* (The Mongolian invasion. Nation and Memory) (Budapest: Osiris, 2003).

ploring the most recent summary of the archaeological research on the Mongol invasion of Hungary, and offering a summary for the possible research directions and archaeological approaches for the new research of this subject.⁷ Subsequently, the Hungarian National Museum put out a nationwide exhibition based on the archaeological finds of the period, along with a corresponding volume which reflected the latest conclusions (fig. 2).⁸ These two volumes offered the state of research on the Mongol invasion of Hungary, and new archaeological finds since then have provided confirmation for the ideas put forward in them. Lastly, János B. Szabó, a military historian, summarized the results of his research in an essential monograph, which has seen many editions since its original publication in 2007.⁹ Meanwhile, there have been new finds have been discovered that highlight the growing role of archaeological research on this topic. A few years ago, an article published in *Magyar Régészet/Hungarian Archaeology* introduced these archaeological findings on the invasion of region, which indicated sites with direct evidence of killing and destruction by the Mongols, to a much wider readership.¹⁰ All of these may be said to have represented the state of the research field up to the recent present. However, additional publications in the last few years related to ongoing archaeological excavations, along with publications on earlier finds, continue to offer new clues which help shed light on the Battle of Muhi and surrounding events. The publication and interpretation of finds from two sites, for example, were connected directly to the material (weapons) or human bone remains of the warriors who died in the battle.¹¹

Indeed, it could be said that archaeological work specifically is where new findings are being accrued on a regular basis, and in light of these, we argue that the time is ripe for “revisiting” Muhi. This is especially needful when we consider that there seems to be a number of persisting questions and mysteries surrounding the course of the battle between the Mongols and Hungarians, and even where exactly the various stages of it took place. Furthermore, there are aspects of the present literature which reflect possible misconceptions and misinterpretations.

REASSESSING THE TEXTUAL RECORDS

The Battle of Muhi can be viewed as a rather well-documented medieval event, or at the very least we could confidently assert that the sources that mention aspects of it originate from very diffuse geographical regions – to an extraordinary degree for a thirteenth century event.¹² The most useful accounts are undoubtedly those found in the works of Master Rogerius¹³ and Thomas of Split,¹⁴ two churchmen who lived in the Kingdom of Hungary, and their Latin language writings clearly relied on eye-witness testimony. The battle

⁷ József Laszlovszky, “Tatárjárás és régészet” (The archaeology of the Mongolian invasion), in *Tatárjárás. Nemzet és emlékezet*, ed. Balázs Nagy (Budapest: Osiris, 2003), 453–468.

⁸ Ágnes Ritoók and Éva Garam (eds.), *A tatárjárás* (Budapest: Hungarian National Museum, 2007).

⁹ János B. Szabó, *A tatárjárás. A mongol hódítás és Magyarország* (Budapest: Corvina, 2007, 2010, 2016).

¹⁰ József Laszlovszky, “Material Remains of the Mongolian Invasion in Hungary and Development-Led Archaeology,” *Hungarian Archaeology* Spring (2012), 1–3.

¹¹ Szabolcs Rosta and György V. Székely (eds.), “*Carmen miserabile*” *A tatárjárás magyarországi emlékei. Tanulmányok Pálóczi Horváth András 70. születésnapja tiszteletére* (Kecskemét: Kecskeméti Katona József Múzeum, 2014); Mária Wolf, “Régészeti adatok a muhi csata történetéhez.” In: “*Carmen miserabile*” *A tatárjárás magyarországi emlékei. Tanulmányok Pálóczi Horváth András 70. születésnapja tiszteletére*, Szabolcs Rosta and György V. Székely (eds.) (Kecskemét: Kecskeméti Katona József Múzeum, 2014), 69–80; Tamás Pusztai, “Buzogánnyal, tarsollyal és késtok-merevítővel eltemetett halott a muhi csatából.” In: “*Carmen miserabile*” *A tatárjárás magyarországi emlékei. Tanulmányok Pálóczi Horváth András 70. születésnapja tiszteletére*, Szabolcs Rosta and György V. Székely (eds.) (Kecskemét: Kecskeméti Katona József Múzeum, 2014), 141–150.

¹² For the most complete compilation of these sources in Hungarian translation, see: Nagy Balázs (ed.): *Tatárjárás. Nemzet és emlékezet* (Budapest: Osiris, 2003), 17–227.

¹³ Janos Bak and Martyn Rady (trans.), *Master Roger’s Epistle to the Sorrowful Lament upon the Destruction of the Kingdom of Hungary by the Tatars* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2010), 180–191.

¹⁴ Damir Karbić et al. (trans.), *History of the Bishops of Salona and Split* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2006), 260–271.

is mentioned in numerous chronicles from all over Latin Christendom,¹⁵ but also in Russian chronicles,¹⁶ reports of Franciscan emissaries to the Mongols,¹⁷ the correspondence of European prelates and rulers including Emperor Frederick II,¹⁸ along with the aforementioned Chinese and Persian sources. Indeed, a version of Juvaini's account persisted in the work of the fifteenth century Timurid court historian, Khwandamir¹⁹ and a very garbled version (which shifted the events to Moscow) is found in the seventeenth century Turkic history of the Khanate of Khiva's Abu al-Ghazi Bahadur.²⁰

Despite their quantity, the extant sources are often cursory, confused, and frustrating in what they fail to mention, leaving vast lacunae in our knowledge of the sequence of events and where to locate them geographically. This has unquestionably resulted in some of the ongoing debate and mystery surrounding the battle. Moreover, with the exception of C de Bridia's *Tatar Relation*, we cannot argue that important sources have cropped up in the last five decades that add anything substantial to our knowledge of the battle.²¹ The most important and descriptive sources are well known and have been largely analyzed in previous scholarly work – we cannot expect to arrive at a drastic reassessment of Muhi solely on the basis of textual evidence. However, what we contend is that perhaps certain aspects of the textual material have not been evaluated properly. For instance, while the Chinese source material has been previously taken into account by excellent Hungarian scholars, it seems that they have not realized the full implications that the place names provided in the *Yuan Shi* have for our understanding of Mongol positions on the eve of the battle.²²

Moreover, the entire body of literature, besides the most important and descriptive sources, which could help us arrive at firmer conclusions has not been fully utilized up to the present. The records of Franciscan and Dominican missionaries and emissaries provide details on Mongol tactics evidently stemming to a large degree from eyewitnesses and combatants in the Mongol invasions of Russia, Hungary, and Poland, but they are seldom cross-referenced with narratives of the campaigns. Sources from Andalusian, Middle Eastern, Armenian, and East Asian authors can all contribute to a broader interpretation of the 1241–1242 campaign against Hungary and it is doubtful that these have been fully explored. Moreover, when we re-analyze all these sources with our advancing knowledge of the Mongols' *modus operandi* and medieval Hungary's topography and landscape, and in the light of archaeology, it could lead to new interpretations of old material, which relates to our second major aim.

A NEW LOCALIZATION OF THE BATTLEFIELD FEATURES AND THE BATTLE'S STAGES

Improving our understanding of the Battle of Muhi as a series of events is concomitant with an improved identification of the geographical sites where various episodes of the battle occurred. Based on the sources, it is clear that the battle was actually a series of sporadic engagements that unfolded in prolonged stages at different sites. From the same records, we are aware of certain key natural or manmade landscape features

¹⁵ For examples, see: Jan Długosz, *The Annals of Jan Długosz: Annales seu cronicae incliti regni Poloniae*, trans. Maurice Michael and Paul Smith (Chichester: IM Publications, 1997), 181–182; Pál Engel, Tamás Pálosfalvi and Andrew Ayton, *The Realm of St. Stephen: A History of Medieval Hungary: 895–1526* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2001), 100.

¹⁶ George Perfecky (trans.), “Galician-Volynian Chronicle” in *The Hypatian Codex, Part II: The Galician-Volynian Chronicle*, Harvard Series in Ukrainian Studies 16:2 (Munich, 1973), 49.

¹⁷ Christopher Dawson (ed.), *The Mission to Asia: Narratives and Letters of the Franciscan Missionaries in Mongolia and China in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1955).

¹⁸ Matthew Paris, *English History: From the Year 1235 to 1273*, J. A. Giles (trans.) v.1 (London: George Bell & Sons, 1889), 342–343.

¹⁹ Wheeler Thackston (trans.), Khwandamir's *Habibu's-Siyar. Tome Three. The Reign of the Mongol and the Turk*. 2 (Cambridge, 1994), 43.

²⁰ Abu al-Ghazi Bahadur. *History of the Turks, Moghuls, and Tatars, Vulgarly Called Tartars together with a Description of the Lands They Inhabit* (London, 1730), 205–207.

²¹ George D. Painter (ed.), “The Tatar Relation” in *The Vinland Map and the Tartar Relation*, R. Skelton et al. (eds.) (New Haven, 1995).

²² Balázs Nagy (ed.): *Tatárjárás. Nemzet és emlékezet* (Budapest: Osiris, 2003), 33.

around which these events centered (e.g. the hotly contested bridge spanning the Sajó, the Hungarian camp which was surrounded by the Mongols, the village of Mohi, a highway along which Hungarian troops retreated, etc.). The location of many important features remains conjectural. In a large part, this has to do with the fact that scholars have – up to the present – attempted to reconstruct the battle mainly through the written sources with the contribution of a little geographical and settlement history research.²³ Toponyms found in Asian sources can be dismissed as mere errors or at least too garbled to be of use. Statements found in the sources that cannot be reconciled with the present landscape in the area of the Sajó – for instance the claims made by both Thomas of Split and Juvaini that the Mongol commander Batu mounted a hill shortly before the battle – can be sometimes dismissed as mistakes on the part of medieval authors who were not actually present.²⁴

Our project aims at integrating and synthesizing findings from a wider range of disciplines than has previously been attempted. Key to this is the integration of archaeological findings into the picture. A number of recent articles have been published in Hungarian which detail at least two excavated finds which can be connected to the battle. Mária Wolf has excavated a settlement site in the framework of rescue projects of the M3 motorway near Hejőkeresztúr and this research has revealed a sunken-floor house from the Arpad Period with archaeological finds not characteristic of the average material culture of contemporary villages.²⁵ Her conclusion was that the finds can be connected to the battle of Muhi and the site has also been discussed in the context of the Mongol invasion in the aforementioned article by József Laszlovszky.²⁶ Furthermore, Mária Wolf argued in her detailed publication on the swords and one piece of an armor that “based on the archaeological finds, here we can see the material culture of a larger than average rural settlement mixed with the objects of those who were running away from the battlefield.”²⁷ She has formulated a hypothesis that the site can be connected to the route along which Prince Coloman fled the battlefield.²⁸ This publication has also pointed out the importance of studying the medieval historical-geographical situation and its relevance for the localization of various elements of the battle. The other important finds in this context were the burials published by Tamás Pusztai, as they were also connected to the events. Two burials with very significant objects were found in a pit near the settlement remains of Mohi, at the edge of what was the thirteenth century village. The sabretache and scabbard of a knife were attached to the belt of one of the skeletons, while near the other body, a bridle and eight coins from the years 1235–1241 were excavated. An octagonal-shaped iron mace was also found near the first body and it must have belonged to a warrior of Asiatic origin who took part in the battle (*fig. 3*).²⁹ Based on the excavated features and on the

²³ For examples of the historical-geographical approach to the battle site, see: Csaba Csorba, “A Sajó-menti csata (1241).” In: *Ónod monográfiája*, László Veres and Gyula Viga (eds.) (Ónod: Ónod önkormányzata, 2000), 65–86; Tamás Bodnár, “Ónod környékének középkorban elpusztult települései.” In: *Ónod monográfiája*, László Veres and Gyula Viga (eds.) (Ónod: Ónod önkormányzata, 2000), 87–117.

²⁴ The description of a hill is certainly curious and an issue which requires a fuller investigation before being dismissed as simply an error, though indeed there are no major hills close to the general area of the battle. For an example of an author dismissing the account of the hill based on observation of the modern landscape, see: John Man, *Genghis Khan: Life, Death, and Resurrection* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2007), 271.

²⁵ Mária Wolf, “Hejőkeresztúr-Vizekköze. Árpád-kori település a XI–XII. századból.” In: *Utak a múltba. Az M3-as autópálya régészeti leletmentései*, Pál Raczy, Tibor Kovács, Alexandra Andres (eds.) (Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, 1997), 143, 195–197; Mária Wolf, “Hejőkeresztúr-Vizekköze (Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén M.) – Tatárjárás idején elpusztult település.” In: *A tatárjárás*, Ágnes Ritoók and Éva Garam (eds.) (Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, 2007), 44–46.

²⁶ József Laszlovszky, “Material Remains of the Mongolian Invasion in Hungary and Development-Led Archaeology,” *Hungarian Archaeology* Spring (2012), 1–3.

²⁷ Mária Wolf, “Régészeti adatok a muhi csata történetéhez.” In: “*Carmen miserabile*” *A tatárjárás magyarországi emlékei. Tanulmányok Pálóczi Horváth András 70. születésnapja tiszteletére*, Szabolcs Rosta and György V. Székely (eds.) (Kecskemét: Kecskeméti Katona József Múzeum, 2014), 75.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 76.

²⁹ Tamás Pusztai, “Buzogánnyal, tarsollyal és késtok-merevítővel eltemetett halott a muhi csatából.” In: “*Carmen miserabile*” *A tatárjárás magyarországi emlékei. Tanulmányok Pálóczi Horváth András 70. születésnapja tiszteletére*, Szabolcs Rosta and György V. Székely (eds.) (Kecskemét: Kecskeméti Katona József Múzeum, 2014), 141–150.

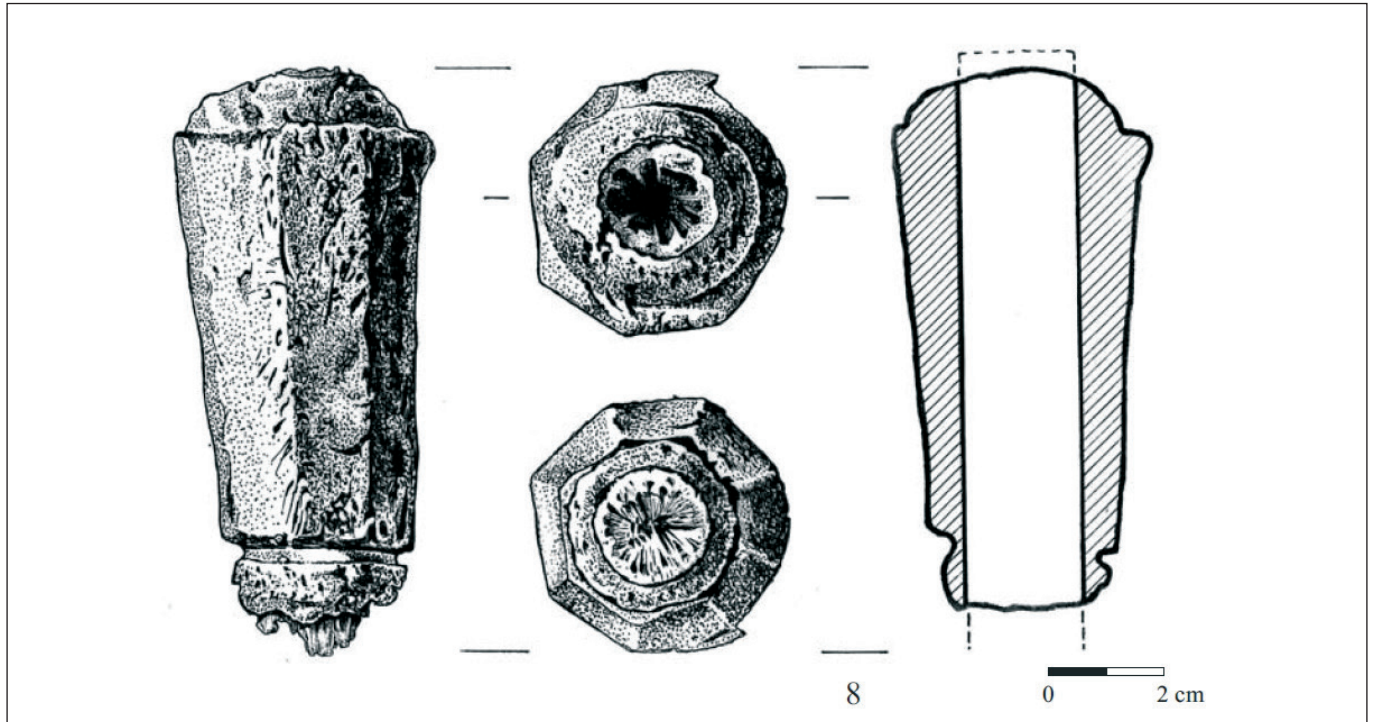


Figure 3: An iron macehead found in a burial at the edge of the medieval settlement of Mohi

detailed study of the objects (bridle, knife-scabbard), it can be firmly argued that the two deviant burials belonged to casualties of the Battle of Muhi (fig. 4). This most recent archaeological literature and the work already carried out on the former medieval settlement of Mohi will serve as a starting point from which we intend to carry out a thorough investigation of the historical geography of the larger battle area.³⁰

For example, based on the new interpretation of the settlement archaeological information from the site of Mohi, the position of the important medieval roadway through the settlement which led to a crossing on the Sajó River can be established. The dating of this road by contextualizing it into the settlement network of the region is crucial for our understanding of the movements of different troop contingents during the battle. This reconstruction will be accompanied with an intensive archaeological survey, including the application of metal detectors in specific targeted areas. Battlefield- or conflict-archaeology has proven to be one of the fastest developing areas of archaeological research and the special team of the Hungarian Military History Institute has already produced significant results through their complex, interdisciplinary research on battlefields that are of high importance for Hungarian history.³¹ Systematic metal detecting with the help of amateur detectorists could be a contribution to a future research project.³²

³⁰ Tamás Pusztai, “Muhi középkori mezőváros régészeti kutatásának topográfiai előkészítéséről.” *Herman Ottó Múzeum Évkönyve* 33–34 (1996), 33–59; József Laszlovszky, Tamás Pusztai, and Gábor Tomka, “Muhi-templomdomb. Középkori falu, mezőváros és út a XI–XVII. századból.” In: *Utak a múltba. Az M3-as autópálya régészeti leletmentései*, szerk. Pál Raczky, Tibor Kovács, Alexandra Anders (eds.) (Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum 1997), 144–150; Tamás Pusztai, “A középkori Mohi régészeti kutatása.” In: *Ónod monográfiája*. László Veres and Gyula Viga (Ónod: Ónod önkormányzata, 2000), 119–157; Tamás Pusztai, “Két középkori település szerkezeti rekonstrukciója térinformatikai eszközök segítségével.” *Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve – Studia Archaeologica* 9 (2003), 407–417; Tamás Pusztai, “A középkori falvak és mezővárosok régészeti kutatása.” In: *A középkor és kora újkor régészete Magyarországon*, szerk. Benkő Elek–Kovács Gyöngyi (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Régészeti Intézete, 2010), 124–131.

³¹ <http://www.militaria.hu/hadtorteneti-intezet-es-muzeum/hadtorteneti-muzeum/targyi-gyujtemenyi-osztaly/hadiregeszetigyujtemeny>. Accessed: January 8, 2017.

³² For an archaeological project in which such an approach proved successful, see: Máté Szabó, Gábor Bertók, Csilla Gáti, and Éva Szajcsán, “A mohácsi csatater kutatása – Az első országos fémkeresős szakmai hétvége és tanulságai.” *Magyar Régészet* Summer (2016), 3–4.

Of particular importance is pinpointing the location of the bridge around which a range of accounts state that much of the fighting took place. Partly this will be done by an investigation of the archaeological finds in the area such as wooden postings, with the aim of dating them.³³ Furthermore, the task will require a geo-morphological and hydro-geographic analysis to offer a better reconstruction of the thirteenth century course of the Sajó River. Particularly when we consider high degree of meandering of the Sajó, it is clear that its boundaries and course might have changed over the intervening centuries. A similar investigation proved to be very successful in reconstructing the medieval changes of river courses in the area of the Drava, something which was crucial for the interpretation of the contemporary land-use and settlement network.³⁴ Another similar reconstruction was done in the area of the Middle Tisza region, near Nagy-
gyrév, based partly on archaeological field surveys.³⁵

The use of documents from the thirteenth century and later will also offer us a better chance to reconstruct the surrounding settlement and road system as it existed during the Mongol invasion. This work has already been started by the archaeologists of the Herman Ottó Museum at Miskolc and by the researchers of the County Archive of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén. All of the data will be entered into a GIS system. Different levels and layers of this spatial database will show respectively 1) the modern geographical conditions of the area with the historical changes of the environment, 2) the medieval settlements system based on written evidence and the archaeological field survey, 3) the contemporary finds from the area, along with the various reconstruction attempts for the localization of the battlefield. This reconstructed road, settlement, and hydrogeographical system will enable us to better pinpoint how the various stages of the battle, such as the engagement at the bridge and the subsequent attack on the Hungarian camp, unfolded. It will also help to reconstruct the road network along which the retreat took place and, thus, serve as a basis for further archaeological investigations.

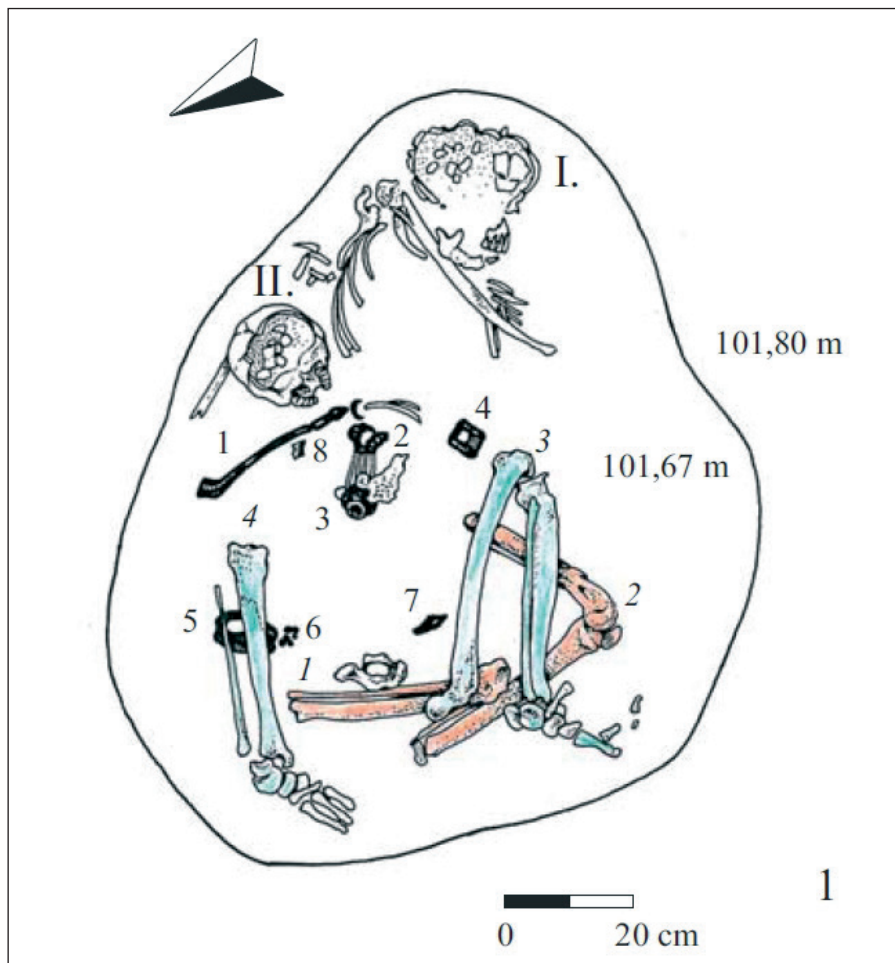


Figure 4: Burial discovered at the edge of the medieval settlement of Mohi. Two skeletons were found in a pit, alongside an iron mace, bridle, coins, a sabretache, and a scabbard

³³ Tamás Pusztai, "A középkori Mohi régészeti kutatása." In: *Ónod monográfiája*, László Veres and Gyula Viga (eds.) (Ónod: Ónod önkormányzata, 2000), 119–144.

³⁴ István Viczián, "Geomorphological Research in and around Berzence, on the Border of the Drava Valley and Inner Somogy Microregion, Hungary." In: *"Per sylvam et per lacus nimios" The Medieval and Ottoman Period in Southern Transdanubia, Southwest Hungary: the Contribution of the Natural Sciences*, Gyöngyi Kovács and Csilla Zatykó (eds.) (Budapest: Institute of Archeology, Research Centre of Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 2016), 75–91.

³⁵ Miklós Rác and József Laszlovszky, "Monostorossáp, egy Tisza menti középkori falu." *Dissertationes Pannonicae* III. 7 (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem, Régészettudományi Intézet: 2005), 77–95.



Figure 5. A gold-plated headdress, found in the ruins of a building destroyed during the Mongol invasion, on the outskirts of Szank. (Gábor Wilhelm's excavation)

Another important aspect of recent archaeological investigations is the interpretations of coin finds from the period (fig. 5). As a growing number of sites in Hungary are revealing new evidence of the impact of the invasion, including coin hoards dated to the period and found amid signs of destruction and mass murder,³⁶ it is possible to re-interpret the chronological phases and different aspects of the invasion in various parts

³⁶ For the latest research on coin findings, see: Maria Vargha, *Hoards, Grave Goods, Jewellery: Objects in Hoards and in Burial Contexts during the Mongol Invasion of Central Europe* (Budapest: Archaeopress, 2015); Balázs Nagy, "Tatárjárás kori pénzletek a Dél-Dunántúlról." In: *Fiatal Középkoros Régészek VI. Konferenciájának Tanulmánykötete*, Csilla Szöllősy and Krisztián Pokrovenszki (eds.) (Székesfehérvár: Szent István Király Múzeum, 2015), 277–285; György V. Székely, "Tatárjárás és numizmatika – Egy történelmi katasztrófa pénzforgalmi aspektusai." In: "*Carmen miserabile*" *A tatárjárás magyarországi emlékei. Tanulmányok Pálóczi Horváth András 70. születésnapja tiszteletére*, Szabolcs Rosta and György V. Székely (eds.) (Kecskemét: Kecskeméti Katona József Múzeum, 2014), 331–344. For the newest works on traces of the Mongol invasion, see: Gyöngyi Gulyás, "Egy elpusztult tatárjárás kori ház Cegléd határában." In: "*Carmen miserabile*" *A tatárjárás magyarországi emlékei. Tanulmányok Pálóczi Horváth András 70. születésnapja tiszteletére*, Szabolcs Rosta and György V. Székely (eds.) (Kecskemét: Kecskeméti Katona József Múzeum, 2014), 29–56; Attila Gyucha and Zoltán Rózsa, "Egyesek darabokra vágva, egyesek egészben? – A tatárjárás nyomainak azonosítási kísérlete egy délalföldi településen." In: "*Carmen miserabile*" *A tatárjárás magyarországi emlékei. Tanulmányok Pálóczi Horváth András 70. születésnapja tiszteletére*, Szabolcs Rosta and György V. Székely (eds.) (Kecskemét: Kecskeméti Katona József Múzeum, 2014), 81–109; Gábor S. Wilhelm, "Akiket nem akartak karddal elpusztítani, tűzben elégették? – Az 1241. évi pusztítás nyomai Szank határában." In: "*Carmen miserabile*" *A tatárjárás magyarországi emlékei. Tanulmányok Pálóczi Horváth András 70. születésnapja tiszteletére*, Szabolcs Rosta and György V. Székely (eds.) (Kecskemét: Kecskeméti Katona József Múzeum, 2014), 81–109; Magdolna Szilágyi and Gábor Serlegi, "Nád közé bújtak...? Egy a tatárjárás során elpusztult település maradványai Dunaföldvár határában." In: "*Carmen miserabile*" *A tatárjárás magyarországi emlékei. Tanulmányok Pálóczi Horváth András 70. születésnapja tiszteletére*, Szabolcs Rosta and György V. Székely (eds.) (Kecskemét: Kecskeméti Katona József Múzeum, 2014), 127–140. Numerous studies in this volume contain additional important data on the destruction inflicted on Hungary during the Mongol invasion.

of the kingdom, and also the movements of different Mongol contingents, including those forces that advanced through Silesia and Dalmatia.³⁷ Besides evidence of great destruction, the archaeological evidence is also revealing how there were actually low levels of destruction in certain areas of the country. The spatial analysis of castle architecture in the second half of the thirteenth century is another question which can provide a better understanding for the so-called Second Mongol Invasion of Hungary in 1285.³⁸

CONCLUSIONS

The project which we are undertaking aims at solving many lingering questions surrounding a battle that holds significance far beyond the borders of Hungary and the demarcations of the thirteenth century. Likewise, such a project has the potential to extend its scope far beyond the events surrounding the Battle of Muhi and progressively evolve into a larger assessment of the medium and long-term impact of the Mongol invasion – an event of clear importance in terms of the social and political legacy it left in Central Europe. The settlement of the Cumans in medieval Hungary in the immediate aftermath belongs to one of the most important consequences of the Mongol Invasion, and the related archaeological investigations belong to one of the most important aspects of medieval archaeology in Hungary.³⁹ A recently published volume dedicated to one of the leading experts of this field, András Pálóczi-Horváth, also shows significant development in research methods and approaches.⁴⁰ Furthermore, the long-term consequences of the invasion are important. As one of the foremost Hungarian medieval historians in the second half of the twentieth century, Jenő Szűcs, noted, the Mongol Invasion sped up a number of economic and social processes which started in the first half of the thirteenth century and crucially shaped the region in the Late Middle Ages.⁴¹ A detailed investigation of these issues belongs within the framework of this new project. It should be added that the establishment of the Mongol Empire is increasingly recognized as a seminal episode in the emergence of globalization so it is essential to investigate what happened on its borders where various factors limited its expansion. This new research will ultimately help us to rethink and more accurately assess both the scale of destruction and the sequence of events.

³⁷ Panos Sophoulis, “The Mongol Invasion of Croatia and Serbia in 1242” *Fragmenta Hellenoslavica* 2 (2015): 251–278; The most up-to-date research was summarized at a recent conference: Mongolian Expansion and its Influence on Development in the Eurasian Area in the 13th and 14th Centuries. 5–8 October 2016, National Heritage Institute in Ostrava.

³⁸ Erik Fügedi made important contributions regarding the castle construction project which have influenced ongoing archaeological work. See: Erik Fügedi, *Castle and Society in Medieval Hungary (1000–1437)* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1986). On the second Mongol invasion of Hungary, see: György Székely, “Egy elfeledett rettegés: a második tatárjárás a magyar történelmi hagyományokban és az egyetemes összefüggésekben.” *Századok* 122 (1988)/1–2, 52–88.

³⁹ Over the last decade, several important monographs on this topic have been published: Szabolcs Rosta (ed.): „Kun-kép” *A magyarországi kunok hagyatéka. Tanulmányok Horváth Ferenc 60. születésnapja tiszteletére* (Kiskunfélegyháza: Bács-Kiskun Megyei Önkormányzat Múzeumi Szervezete, Kiskun Múzeuma, 2009); Júlia Bartha (ed.): *Kunok és jászok 770 éve a Kárpát-medencében. A Jászkunság kutatása 2009* (Szolnok: Kun Összefogás Konzorcium és a Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok Megyei Múzeumok Igazgatósága, 2011); Nora Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom* (Cambridge, 2001); András Pálóczi Horváth, *Keleti népek a középkori Magyarországon. Besenyők, úzok kunok és jászok művelődéstörténeti emlékei*. *Studia ad Archaeologiam Pazmaniensiae* 2 (Budapest – Piliscsaba: Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem Bölcsész- és Társadalomtudományi Kar Régészeti Tanszék, 2014).

⁴⁰ Szabolcs Rosta and György V. Székely (ed.), “*Carmen miserabile*” *A tatárjárás magyarországi emlékei. Tanulmányok Pálóczi Horváth András 70. születésnapja tiszteletére* (Kecskemét: Kecskeméti Katona József Múzeum, 2014).

⁴¹ Jenő Szűcs, *Az utolsó Árpádok*. *História könyvtár. Monográfiák* 1 (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézet: 1993).

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