

DIE BRONZEZEITLICHEN ANHÄNGER IN UNGARN

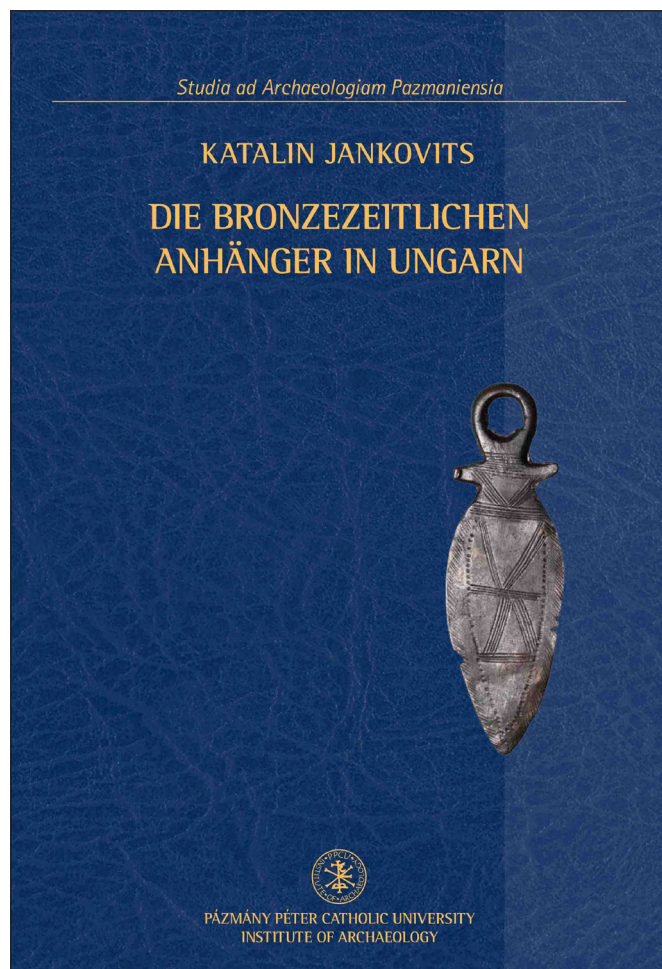
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The Bronze era objects identified as pendants form a findgroup of rich variability and functionality, with specimens numbering thousands. The minuscule pendants, often recovered in ill conditions do not pertain to the recherche finds of the Bronze Age, although they seem only at first glance quick and easy to analyse. Determining their function is no easy task itself, because wagon fittings, horse cavalry harness, strap junctions, belt fittings, parts of sacral items, and finds used as amulets can also be found amongst objects first identified as independent or composite jewels or chifbons. Their dating is a complex task as well, as many types were in use for several periods and only accompanying finds enable a precise chronology. In other cases some specimen are so era specific, that even in fragmentary state can avail dating complex archaeological phenomena. In this extensive, previously unsystemized region of Hungarian find material, the author established a manageable and effective system in this.

The publication of this volume of 333 pages complemented with 155 tables and images conveys a piece of good and bad news simultaneously. The bad news is, that the release of the most extensive series of European Bronze Age research, the Prähistorische Bronzefunde is lagging and the future of the issue became uncertain. It belongs to the bad news is that compared to neighbouring countries, few findtypes have been processed so far Hungary. Before pendants, only the catalogue of swords, metal wares, Transdanubian needles, Early Iron Age hoards, Copper Age axes and picks got to actual publishing. The good news is, that the Studia ad Archaeologiam Pazmaniensia series of the Pázmány Péter Catholic University accepted this monograph.

The professional humility of the editors in handling the manuscript and consercing its original structure is noteworthy. This is an important fact because the published volume is structurally identical to the manual style of the Prähistorische Bronzefunde, due to chronological order and the consecutive numbering of objects.

The author finished the manuscript in 2006 and updated it in 2016 before publishing it in Hungary without including further finds. Thus the processed findmaterial contains 3574 objects of 162 sites, a fifth of which was previously unpublished. The collection is enormus, systemizing finds accessible from



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Hungarian repositories from the early stages of the Bronze Age until the beginning of the Iron Age. This is the reason why the publications of recent years were omitted from the catalogue.

The brief chronological chapter reflects that the author set the dating of processed finds to conventional dating systems. Between the relative chronological rows, the synchronized table begins with H. Müller-Karpe's 1959 division and ends with T. Kemenczei's 1996 scale. Hungarian relative chronological observations, specifications and modifications published since the turn of the millennium have been omitted. The table is complemented with a bar presenting the relative chronological order of Bronze Age cultures of the Carpathian Basin. This list may seem outdated as it lists several cultures and groups not in academic use since decades, yet their presence is a helpful guide for those who handle the original publications of these finds and would like to orient themselves in the temporal and cultural terminology of the 1970s and 80s.

In the classification of the findmaterial the author secluded 34 types further dividing them mostly to 3–5, less frequently to 10–12 variants. The relative chronological order of the objects interrupts, or more precisely, recoils only when the expiration of a type outlasts the introduction of a following variant. This phenomenon is most conspicuous in case of crescent and heart-shaped pendants.

The period spanning from the Early Bronze Age until the beginning of the Late Bronze Age is characterized by ample quantity and low typological variability. Furthermore, most of these finds are grave goods and only their joint chronological and cultural classification with other objects of the findgroup can be conducted. In the Late Bronze Age Urnfield period this tendency is reversed: types highly varied in form appear in meagre quantity. In multiple cases one may observe the hardship the author faced in listing a second or third piece to a variant.

Regarding the complete volume, the term 'pendant' employed in the title can only be used conditionally because of Late Bronze Age types, as bird shaped pendants (Nr. 3015–3022), belt fitting (Nr. 2925 and Nr. 3009–3010) and strap junctions (Nr. 2507–2510) were also included in the catalogue. The youngest specimen of the collection are dateable to Proto-Schytian times, yet not all pendants of this period have been processed. The final examples of composite pendants (Nr. 3105–3108) were included from T. Kemenczei's *Prähistorische Bronzefunde XX/10* volume published in 2005 in a non-exhaustive manner.

The volume ends with attire reconstructions of 56 graves, depicting on which garments and body parts were individual pendant types and combinations worn from the end of the Early Bronze Age until the middle of the Late Bronze Age. Mostly skeletal burials provided source material for these examples, yet in nine instances reconstructions were based on grave goods of cremations or symbolic burials. In all cases hypothetic reconstructions surmise that all jewels placed in burials were either worn directly or attached to attire. Other types of burial depositions and other functions of objects interpreted as jewelry were not considered by the author.

Regarding the relative chronological row of the table summarizing the timeline of objects, it would have been beneficial to use Hungarian terminology. This is primarily discernible in case of Middle Bronze Age and the Kosider Period where the phases of the Urnfield Culture presented are those indigenous to Germany. The chronological table would have better been combined with a timeline marking centuries, assisting the synchronization with other timelines.

All in all one the volume is a fine example of supplementary manual, which alas is becoming an increasingly rare genre in Hungarian archaeology. The volume bears all advantages and detriments of the *Prähistorische Bronzefunde* series. It exhibits a clear manual character which is crucial in processing and later on, referencing 3574 objects. However, the assembly of the manual and its subsequent updating is hindered by the serial numbering of finds, often requiring a lot of time to process between the end of the collection and publication, thus the publication seems outdated. Nonetheless, the thoroughness of the author is a safeguard that researchers of the Bronze Age may rely on the catalogue and the typological system devised of it for a long time.