

## INCREASE AND REVITALISATION

## A selection of the archaeological publications of the Hungarian National Museum

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*As Deputy director of Archaeology Gábor Virágos, PhD has defined, the publication strategy of the National Institute of Archaeology of the Hungarian National Museum (HNM NIA) is based, among others, on the recognition that return represents the final stage of the great variety of archaeological tasks the institution fulfils, and its importance is key for both raising social awareness and decisionmakers. A new publication strategy has been developed for the entire museum; its introduction is supported, at last, by the institution's own publishing house.*

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The publications comprise scientific and popular science series, periodicals, and independent volumes. The most important achievement for archaeology is that the institution has revived traditional but dormant series and gave the existing ones a second wind it is just as important that popular science, which was out of the focus, has become a significant part of its publishing activity.

*Archaeologia Hungarica*, the flagship scientific monograph series of HNM, is the most important series of the institution. This iconic series of Hungarian archaeology integrates the former book series *Monumenta Avarorum*, *Monumenta Germanorum*, *Libelli*, *Inventaria Praehistorica Hungariae*, and *Opuscula Hungariae*, substituting them in a unified form and providing a modern framework for presenting studies about various archaeological topics. Its target audience is the international archaeological community, and it aims to introduce them to the latest achievements of archaeological research in Hungary; accordingly, the volumes are published in English and Hungarian or only English. Three volumes of the renewed series have been released until the end of 2023 (SZENTHE & GÁLL 2022; TARBAY 2022; VICZE & SORENSEN 2023), and other three are in preparation. There is no need to worry about future volumes either: about a dozen planned books are in different stages of completion.

The institution hosted the international conference *First Kings Of Europe* between 26 and 28 April 2023, organised in connection with a parallel exhibition with an identical title in Chicago. On this occasion, the 55th volume of *Archaeologia Hungarica*, a monograph by co-authors Magdolna Vicze and Marie Louise Stig Sorensen, entitled *Living in a Tell. Memory and Abandonment. Százhalombatta–Földvár I (Late Koszider)* (Fig. 1) was published. The volume provides a comprehensive overview of a decades-long excavation and its results, and presents, in eleven studies and a commemoration, the last phase in the history of the Bronze Age *tell* settlement at Százhalombatta.

After years of inactivity, *Folia Archaeologica*, the yearbook of long past of HNM, was revived in a dual role in 2023 as part of the structural transformation. Contentwise, it is composed of two units: the first comprises traditional analytic academic studies in Hungarian and a foreign language, carrying on the tradition of the original journal; accordingly, the foreword entitled *Régészet újratöltve* (Archaeology Reloaded) by Gábor Virágos includes remarks about the drastic changes including the revival of the series, introduced under the aegis of HNM NIA, and the historical lessons learned from the forewords of the first issues of both previous series from 1939 and 1955. A key objective of the yearbook is to provide a forum for regular reports on the results of HNM NIA excavations and studies presenting items from its collections. The second part is the actual year-

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book, giving space to reports on the yearly activity of HNM NIA, including writings on development-led archaeological work, scientific, museum pedagogical and ~educational activity, and new acquisitions in its collections. Volume 58 of the yearbook consists of six studies (two in Hungarian and four in English), five short articles, six obituaries, five reviews, and an overview of the performance of HNM NIA in 2022.

HNM launched the *Tárgyak, Korok, Emberek* (Objects, Eras, People) series in 2023 to continue the best Hungarian and Anglo-Saxon traditions of popular scientific knowledge dissemination. Each volume focuses on one particular historical period or issue and its social, economic, and cultural contexts, starting from an artefact or a group of artefacts in the collection of the museum. The first title of the series is Gergely Szenthe's book *A nagyszentmiklósi kincs* (The Treasure of Nagyszentmiklós). The artefact in the title is the most significant Early Middle Age gold treasure in Europe; it was likely the possession of a high-ranking Avar family, who hid it in the first half of the 9th century AD.

Another volume of the series, Gábor János Tarbay's *A bronzkori kard útja* (The Way of the Bronze Age Sword), is also an archaeological study, discussing one of the most significant Late Bronze Age sword deposits in the Carpathian Basin. The hoard, consisting of fourteen Late Bronze Age swords, was found in Podhering (today part of Munkács/Mukachevo, Ukraine) in 1880. While meticulously introducing the swords made with extraordinary technical expertise, their material, types, and ornaments, and completing the descriptions with spectacular object images, the study goes far beyond description: it is more of a story told in a lively style about the birth of the Bronze Age sword as a weapon type, the technology of its crafting and use, and the long-forgotten burial and sacrificial rites related to such swords.

The book by Gergely Buzás and Olivér Kovács, entitled *A késő középkori magyar királyok sírjai* (Tombs of Late Medieval Hungarian Kings), is a sequel to the book *Az Árpád-házi uralkodók sírjai* (Tombs of Rulers of the Árpád Dynasty), released in 2019. It presents and evaluation of the burials of Hungarian kings from King Charles I (buried in 1342) to the funeral of John Zápolya in 1540, including a brief overview of their rules and eras, and a thorough discussion of all available historical and archaeological sources about their burials.

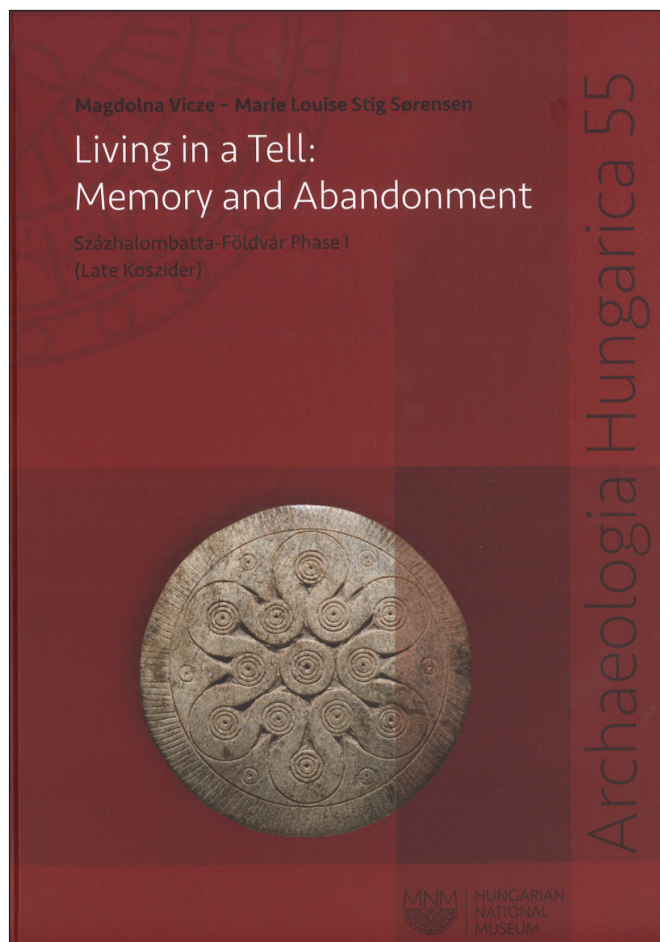


Fig. 1. Magdolna Vicze & Marie Louise Stig Sørensen (2023). *Living in a Tell. Memory and Abandonment. Százhalombatta-Földvár I (Late Koszider)*. Budapest: Hungarian National Museum



Fig. 2. Cover of the 2022 issue of NRInfo

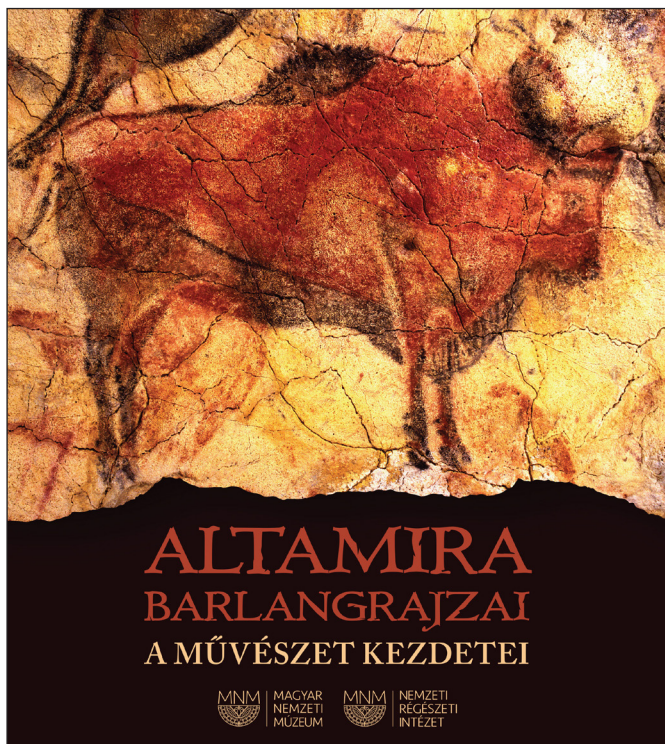


Fig. 3. Pilar Fatás Monforte, Enrique Gutiérrez, Lengyel György & Ramón Montes Barquín (2024).  
*Altamira barlangrajzai. A művészet kezdetei.*  
Budapest: Hungarian National Museum



Fig. 4. Soós Bence & Tarbay János Gábor (2024).  
*A magányos hegy kincsei.*  
*Évezredek történetek a Somló-hegyen.*  
Budapest: Hungarian National Museum

Another issue of *Régész Napló* (Archaeological Diary) was published for our partners in 2023. This practical pocketbook includes brief overviews of twelve HNM NIA excavations from that year and a daily planner for the upcoming one. Intended for the non-professional reader, the short and exciting descriptions are completed by eye-catching artefact photos.

The booklet *NRInfo*, a new journal, balances popular and professional publications. The first issue was released in 2022 (Fig. 2). With its modern, light, but quality design, accessible style, and wealth of colourful images, this journal is a great medium for promoting the professional work of the staff of HNM NIA. It targets both interested enthusiasts and professional archaeologists; therefore, the articles are arranged in a transparent structure and include the most important basic information on each project. Annual issues of the series are planned to be released early in the first quarter of the commencing year, with an overview of the fieldwork and scientific results of the previous year.

The first independent book mentioned here is a volume commemorating Márta H. Kelemen's 80th birthday, entitled *Testas, turres, tegulas titulosque litterate tractavit* and edited by Mónika Merczi. Márta H. Kelemen (1940–2022) was an outstanding archaeologist delving into the study of Roman provinces. Her former colleagues, friends, and admirers surprised her with a festive volume; however, only a single copy was printed for the occasion, and later, HNM undertook the task of publishing the manuscript. The compilation of 28 studies covers several historical periods from the Late Copper to the Early Modern Age, although the focus is mostly on the assemblages and sites of the Roman Imperial Period.

Two significant exhibitions opened in the Hungarian National Museum in 2024. The well-known and impressive prehistoric cave paintings from Spain are displayed in Budapest in the exhibition *Altamira barlangrajzai. A művészet kezdetei* (The Cave Paintings of Altamira. The Beginnings of Art). Its perfectly designed catalogue with spectacular images and style was written by curator György Lengyel. Another exhibition, entitled *A magányos hegy kincsei. Évezredek történetek a Somló-hegyen* (Treasures of the Lonely Hill. Millennia-old Stories of Somló Hill) displays four Late Bronze and Early Iron Age hoards and their deposition contexts. Bence Soós and János Gábor Tarbay wrote the guide of the

exhibition, while the impressive artefact photos and compositions rich in detail are the work of György László.

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