

Editorial

The present issue of *Studia Hercynia* is the outcome of a Humboldt-Kolleg on *Reinecke's Heritage. Terminology, Chronology and Identity in Central Europe between 2300 and 1600 BC* held on June 12th-16th, 2017 at Chateau Křtiny, near Brno in South Moravia. The meeting was generously supported by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and welcomed 38 active participants from seven countries, delivering 30 talks in total. The main organisers were Michal Erné (Institute of Archaeology, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Prague), Volker Heyd (Department of Archaeology & Anthropology, University of Bristol), Peter Pavúk (Institute of Classical Archaeology, Charles University, Prague), and Jaroslav Peška (Department of History, Palacký University, Olomouc / Archeologické Centrum Olomouc), with the active help of Marek Verčík in Prague and Martin Golec in Olomouc. The key note lecture was delivered by prof. Harald Meller.

The chronology of the Early Bronze Age (EBA) in Central Europe, both relative and absolute, has witnessed some turbulent developments over the past years. The increased amount of absolute dates, but also a new level in the quality of individual dates, gave rise to a number of new regional studies. At the same time, year after year new cemeteries, settlements and hoards got excavated, published and discussed in scholarly circles. This also permitted the better recognition of potential discrepancies but also common ground between the various relevant regions, most of which still use a periodization and terminology based on the over 100-year-old system introduced by Paul Reinecke (1902), albeit adjusted to the needs of the individual regions.

In doing so, the state of knowledge for the relative and absolute chronology of the EBA in Central Europe, as well as the periodization systems used, had to be re-assessed in the first place. Inevitably, the starting point had to be the Reinecke system itself and what it still means for the individual regions today: How do we define his individual phases today? How are they to be interpreted? Do they mean the same thing in different regions? Do they mean the same thing as let's say seventy years ago? Are the individual phases really synchronous all along the Danube? Do we need to move forward and offer new solutions? We obviously do, but should we throw out the baby with the bathwater too, i.e. abolishing the Reinecke system altogether?

The main results of the conference, mirrored also by the papers in the present issue, can be summarised as follows:

- It was confirmed that the main typo-chronological division between the Reinecke stage Bronze A1 and A2 still exists, with the transition around 2000 BC. Also confirmed was that the classic phase of the Únětice culture definitely belongs already to the A2 stage (contra Václav Moucha), together with the postclassic phase.
- Whereas the A1 and A2 division worked well across larger areas, its further subdivision into sub-phases has proven to be somewhat difficult, especially since it has been well shown that different authors do not necessarily mean the same if they talk about let's say phase A2a.
- The previously hotly discussed topic of stage A3 was on the agenda as well, with almost unified agreement on its non-existence. Previously equally vigorously debated stage A0

was on the contrary hardly addressed, to our regret, but it could indicate that its existence has meanwhile been generally accepted.

- Several papers showed that culturally the EBA continues until the stage B1, but the stage itself already shows also new elements of the following MBA development.
- The new absolute chronological data and their consequences for the beginning and the end of the EBA presented by Stockhammer *et al.* 2015 (published in *PLoS ONE* journal) was appreciated for bringing out new *impeti* for research, but it was not really accepted by the participants in its entirety.
- The known regional differences were re-assessed, with more clarity having been brought to the various issues. It was interesting to see that while the Hungarian colleagues (out of tradition) do not use the Reinecke periodization, but they would have liked to, the Polish colleagues did not even attempt that, since they did not find it applicable 'in the north'.
- The fact that the Hungarian colleagues still see the beginning of the Bronze Age already around 2600/2800 BC, including the Beaker-cultures, was inevitably addressed at a conference such as this one. This is also a form of heritage (or rather inheritance), alas not from Reinecke, taking the Aegean as a reference point but not placing any culture-historical meaning to it anymore.
- An interesting discussion developed also around the concept of the EBA archaeological cultures as such, especially in South Moravia, Southwest Slovakia, and Lower Austria. There seems to be a lot of geographical and chronological overlap among the so-called cultures, which calls for a new assessment of their concept.
- Finally, some papers made it recognisable that while the amount of ¹⁴C dates is on the rise, its processing needs a rigorous system and there is still a lot of work to be done. For the future, the aDNA studies combined with ¹⁴C-dating and isotopic analyses are the direction to go and can bring potentially unexpected discoveries.

On a personal level, we would like to highlight the contributions by the young colleagues, for whom it was often the first time at such a large and specialized international conference. They had received a lot of good feedback, which is reflected in several of the present publications. The 11 submitted papers are ordered geographically, from West to East. All contributions were peer-reviewed.

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