

INTENTIONAL DESTRUCTION OF INVENTORY IN CELTIC WARRIOR GRAVES IN THE MIDDLE DANUBE REGION

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ZETOCHOVÁ, Zuzana. Intencionálne ničenie inventára v keltských bojovníckych hrobách zo stredného Podunajska. Spolu s objavením sa prvých žiarových hrobov na keltských pohrebiskách v oblasti stredného Podunajska sa výrazne zmenil aj vzťah medzi telom pochovaného a hrobovým inventárom. Objavenie sa fenoménu zámerného ničenia hrobového inventára je dokladom zmien v súbore rituálov spojených s pohrebom. Každá výrazná zmena rituálov vyvoláva množstvo otázok. Je ale veľmi komplikované hľadať vysvetlenia pre tieto zmeny. Detailná analýza žiarových hrobov nám môže napomôcť odhaliť skryté informácie o rituáloch a ostatných procesoch spojených s pohrebom. Identifikácia a interpretácia rituálov spojených s pohrebom a smrťou je jedným z najzaujímavejších výskumných smerov v archeológii. Táto snaha však musí zahŕňať viaceré interdisciplinárne prístupy. V priestore stredného Podunajska bolo zámerné ničenie inventára spojené len so žiarovými hrobmi. Naproti tomu, v západokeltskom prostredí sa s týmto zvykom stretávame pomerne často aj v kostrových hrobách (deformácia zbraní v hrobách bojovníkov). Rozdiely môžeme identifikovať nielen medzi jednotlivými regiónmi, ale aj na samotných pohrebiskách v stredodunajskom priestore.

Kľúčové slová: stredné Podunajsko, Kelti, bojovnícke hroby, ničenie inventára

Keywords: Middle Danube region, Celts, warrior graves, destruction of inventory

Warriors represent a very special group from various perspectives. The grave assemblage is distinctive from other graves on cemetery. It is not reflected only in the presence of weapons and armour, but also in rituals performed before, during and after the burial. Some of these rituals are visible in the archaeological context, about some of them one can only speculate.

The custom of the intentional destruction of inventory is very common in cremation graves of Celtic warriors in the Middle Danube Region. However, no special attention was paid to this phenomenon. It was mentioned only marginally in complex studies dedicated to Celtic burial rite (*Haruštiak 2009, 123; Ramszl 2002, 118, 119; Zetochová 2015, 148*). It is important to that this custom does not appear only in warrior graves, but also in the graves of the entire population buried in Celtic cemeteries. Several researchers from surrounding regions have already studied the weapon destruction in Celtic graves, sanctuaries and votive depositions (*Buchwald 2005, 121; Măndescu 2012; Pleiner/Scott 1993, 161*).

This paper deals with the territory of the Middle Danube, which covers south-western Slovakia, Transdanubia (north-western Hungary), Moravia and Lower Austria. Data from the territory of Lower Austria and Moravia were, however, insufficient for any detailed analysis. The main problem is a small number of cremation graves belonging to warriors (only 9 graves). However the information about inventory deformation in graves from Lower Austria and Moravia territory is included in the text. Almost all graves contained destroyed weapons. Disturbed graves or graves with insufficient amount of written documentation were not included in the database.

The main database for a detailed analysis of weapon destruction in Celtic cremation graves therefore contains 77 graves from 15 cemeteries. In almost 51% of them destroyed weapons

were deposited. The ratio of graves with damaged weapons from Slovakia and Transdanubia is different (54% from Slovakia and 42% from Transdanubia), and it differs from site to site (Table 1).

Four main groups of artefacts can be identified in the analysis of the inventory destruction: jewellery and clothing fittings, weapons and armour, tools and pottery. Metal artefacts were ritually destroyed in several ways:

- deformation by fire (partial or full); the stage of deformation affects the possibility of the artefact identification;
- bending, deformation of the original shape of the artefact (no problem with the identification of original shape and function);
- fragmentation – intentional destruction of the artefact; the stage of fragmentation affects the analysis of the artefact type and its original dimensions.

There were no rules for inventory destruction. Even in the case of the full weapon kit, only a part of weapons may have been deformed and others were left untouched. In the studied area a high variability in weapon destruction can be observed. On several swords, scabbards, lances and shield buckles are visible traces of fire without any type of bending (e.g. Maňa – grave 32; Rezi – graves 23 and 41; Ludas – grave 1055 and 1057).

Table 1. Analysed Celtic cemeteries from the Middle Danube region.

Site	Number of cremation graves	Number of graves with weapons	Number of graves with intentionally deformed weapons	Source
South-western Slovakia				
Dubník	5	4	2	<i>Bujna 1989</i>
Holiare	23	7	4	<i>Benadik/Vlček/Ambros 1957</i>
Chotín X	4	1	1	<i>Ratimorská 1981</i>
Malé Kosihy	61	10	6	<i>Bujna 1995b</i>
Maňa	17	6	2	<i>Beňadik 1983</i>
Transdanubia				
Balatongyörök	1	1	1	<i>Horváth 1987</i>
Bucsu	11	2	1	<i>Ilon/Nagy 2010</i>
Magyarszerdahely	23	6	1	<i>Horváth 1987</i>
Ludas	72	19	9	<i>Szabó/Tankó 2012</i>
Rezi-Rezicseri	53	5	3	<i>Horváth 1987</i>
Vác	31	5	1	<i>Hellebrandt 1999</i>
Moravia				
Brno-Chrlice	1	1	1	<i>Čižmářová 2011</i>
Kobylnice	3	2	1	<i>Čižmářová 2011</i>
Ponětovice	35	4	3	<i>Meduna 1962; Čižmářová 2011</i>
Lower Austria				
Pottenbrunn	11	4	3	<i>Ramsl 2002</i>
Sum	351	77	39	

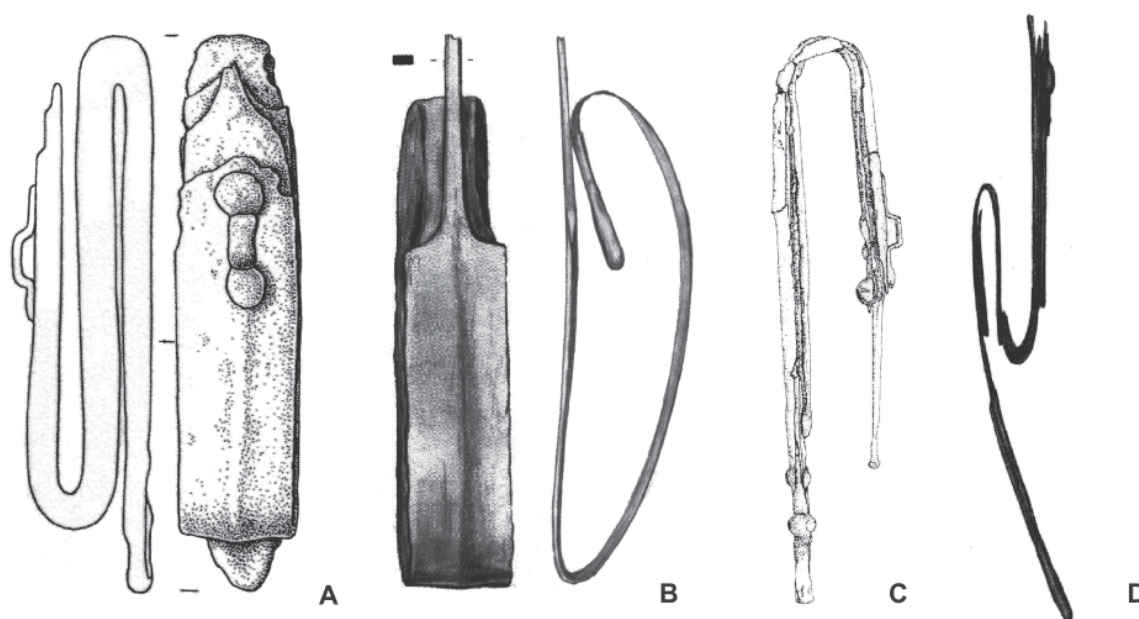


Fig. 1. Various types of sword deformation. A – Dubník, grave 27 (after Bujna 1989, Taf. XXVII: B-6); B – Ludas, grave 703 (after Szabó/Tankó 2012, Pl. XVI: 1); C – Pottenbrunn, grave 1005 (after Ramsl 2002, Taf. 80: 7a); D – Ludas, grave 879 (after Szabó/Tankó 2012, Pl. XXI: 1).
Different scale

Weapons destruction

The sword as such is the symbolic extension of warrior's arm. It can be analysed from the aspects of typology, chronology, use-wear and metallurgy. Connected with burials, sword and other weapons and armour can be seen as symbols of status. Buried warriors were given full (sword, lance and shield) or partial weaponry. Before, during and after the burial ceremony many rituals were conducted in order to bring the soul to the Otherworld. Intentional destruction of inventory represents only one of these rituals.

The most common type of sword deformation was bending of the blade which was done in several ways (fig. 1). Swords were folded into an S-shape; two to four times (Dubník – grave 27; Malé Kosihy – graves 62 and 477; Ludas – graves 879 and 1288; Ponětovice – grave 26 and Pottenbrunn – grave 975 and probably also Maňa – grave 122). A less common type of deformation was bending of the blade approximately in the middle (Dubník – grave 15; Ludas – graves 904, 1005 and 1056 and Pottenbrunn – grave 1005). In a few cases the sword blade was folded in one direction/ rolled-in (Holiare – graves 29 and 544, Ludas – graves 703 and 1140 and Magyarszerdahely – grave 30). Gentle undulating of the sword blade identified in the analysed grave 9 from cemetery in Brno-Chrlice was rather rare. A similar type of deformation was identified in the grave 9 in Kobylnice. In the rest of the analysed graves were identified other or combined types of bending (Ponětovice – grave 14 and Vác – grave 40).

The scabbard was present in all graves, usually bent together with the sword which was kept inside the scabbard. There is an important exception in the case of the grave 30 from Magyarszerdahely where the sword and the scabbard were bent separately. The sword was folded three times in one direction (rolled-in), but the scabbard was very tightly folded twice into an S-shape. Moreover, the sword was pulled through an anklet. The damaged weapons were deposited separately from the concentration of the cremated human remains (Horváth 1987, fig. 30, Pl. XIII: 1a, 2a). A similar find of the separately bent sword and scabbard come from Ribjek near Mokronog (Laharnar 2013).

A distinct feature presents the grave 544 from Holiare, where two bent swords were included in the inventory. One sword was rolled-in four times, the other one three times fold-

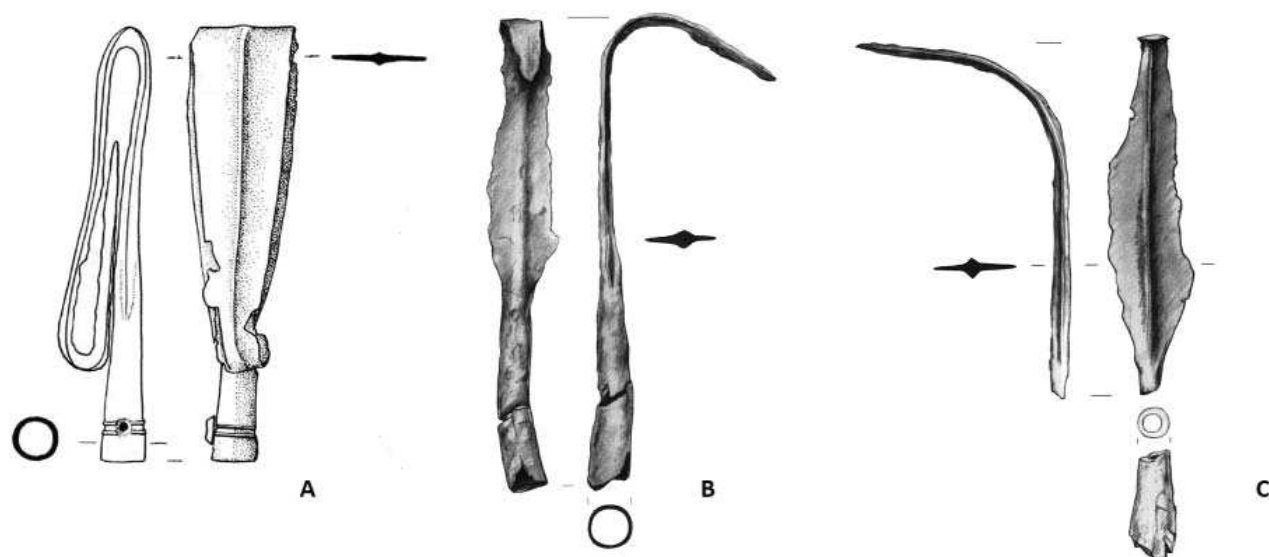


Fig. 2. Various types of lance deformation. A - Dubník, grave 15 (after Bujna 1989, Taf. XII: B-4); B - Ludas, grave 879 (after Szabó/Tankó 2012, Pl. XXII: 1); C - Ludas, grave 1005 (Szabó/Tankó 2012, Pl. XXXIII: 2). Different scale

ed in an S-shape. The cremated human remains were scattered on the metal grave goods (Benadik/Vlček/Ambros 1957, 93, Tab. XXXVI: 6, 7). In case of this grave we could consider the possibility of the double cremation grave. This phenomenon was the subject of study of several researchers (Czarnecka 2007; Egg 1999).

The grave 170 from Bucsú is remarkable, because only a bent scabbard without sword was present (Ilon/Nagy 2010, 79, fig. 15). A similar situation was uncovered in two graves in Rezi where the graves 23 and 41 contained only fragments of scabbards damaged by fire without swords (Horváth 1987, 107 and 114).

Weapon fragmentation was identified in the graves 6, 31, 75 and 453 from Malé Kosihy. In the grave 31 the complete grave inventory including the sword with scabbard, parts of the shield and maybe a lance was fragmented. In this case the ritual fragmentation of the grave inventory was connected with the secondary burial ritual. The grave was opened probably shortly after the burial which is suggested by the shaft identified during the excavation (Bujna 1995b, 25; Taf. 6: 1a-c; 7: 1, 2a-b, 3, 5). Metal fragments, burnt human and animal remains were evenly scattered on the whole surface of the pit in graves 6, 31 and 75.

A different situation was documented in the grave 453 where the fragments of weapons were deposited in the north-east part of the grave pit. The cremated human remains were deposited on the pile close to the western wall of the grave. The rest of the inventory was untouched, only weapons were destroyed (Bujna 1995b, 90; Abb. 453).

Lances were in most cases simply bent in the middle of the leaf part (fig. 2). The specimens from the grave 15 in Dubník (bent twice - in the same direction) and from the grave 16 in Ponětovice (one side of the leaf was bent inside) are distinct finds of this kind. A rare situation was documented in the inhumation grave 562 from Pottenbrunn cemetery which contained a slightly deformed lance (Ramsl 2002, 82; Abb. 83). In this case, however, it is very difficult to distinguish intentional deformation from accidental bending. In the territory south of Bologna, for instance, inhumation graves with bent weapons were quite common; e.g. graves 35 and 55 from Monte Bibele cemetery (Vitali 2003, 129, 189) and in the cemetery Kutná hora-Karlov in Central Bohemia - graves 17 and 37 (Valentová/Sankot 2011, 301, 321).

Shield buckles had traces of fire on their surface in a few cases, e.g. in Holiare (grave 70) and Maňa (grave 32). Fragmentation of shield parts was identified in three graves from the Malé Kosihy cemetery - grave 6, 31 and 453. Bending was also quite a common type of

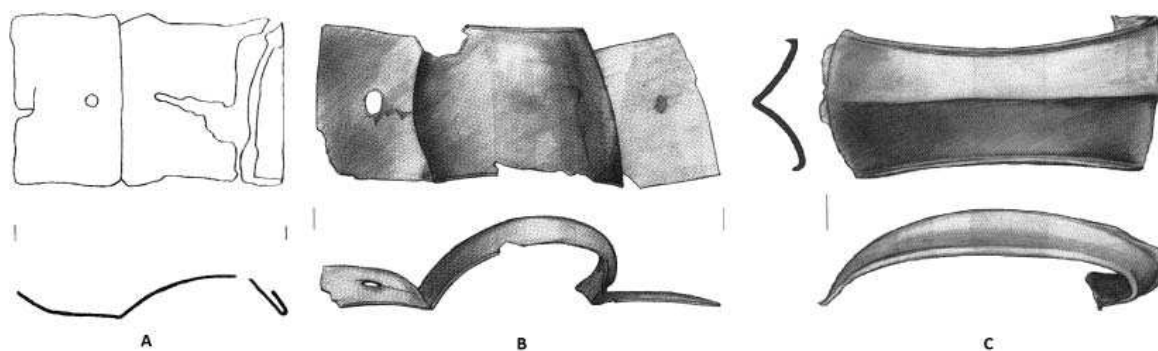


Fig. 3. Various examples of bending of shield buckles. A – Chotín X, grave 27/72 (after Ratimorská 1981, Tab. XXB: 4); B – Ludas, grave 879 (after Szabó/Tankó 2012, Pl. XXIII: 2); C – Ludas, grave 1056 (after Szabó/Tankó 2012, Pl. XLII: 8). Different scale

shield buckles deformation (see fig. 3) – Chotín (grave 27/72), Malé Kosihy (grave 62), Ludas (graves 879 and 1056). The warrior grave 27/72 from Chotín X contained only a shield buckle, and no weapons were present (Ratimorská 1981, 52, Tab. XX: B: 1-4). One side of it was bent outwards.

Chronology of the custom

First cremation graves appear in the Middle Danube region in the LT B1 phase. Most of the early cremations belonged to warriors, and graves contain deformed weapons already in this phase. In western regions of the Celtic world cremation appeared already in the Early La Tène period. For example the grave 7 from Nebringen contained a deformed sword in a scabbard (Krämer 1964, 26, Taf. 10A: 1).

Chronological analysis of the custom of weapon deformation is biased by the small number of graves from LT B1 and LT B1/B2. All graves from Moravia with deformed swords and lances are included in the LT C1b-c. Analysis was therefore performed only for the graves from Slovakia and Transdanubia territory. Individual regions show different tendencies in the intentional inventory custom. More than 50% of graves from LT B2 contained deformed weapons. A decrease of the custom in graves from Slovakia can be observed from LT B2/C1. Conversely in Transdanubia after a small decrease of the custom from LT B2/C1, weapon

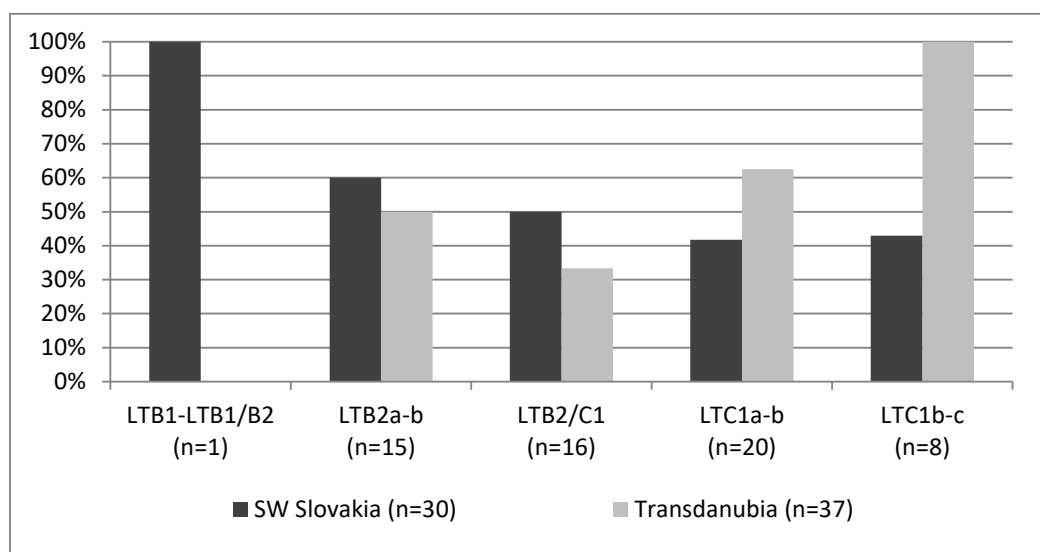


Fig. 4. Chronological analysis of weapon destruction in cremation graves of warriors from Slovakia and Transdanubia territory. The number in brackets signifies - the number of warrior graves in the chronological phase

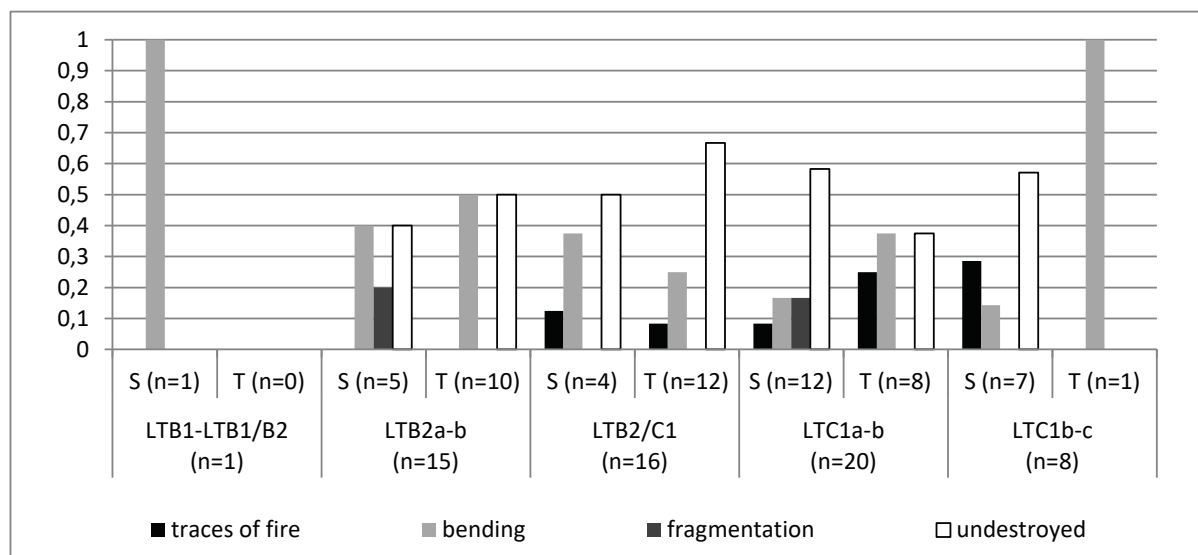


Fig. 5. Weapon destruction in analysed Celtic cremation graves from Slovakia (S) and Transdanubia (T). The number in brackets signifies the- number of warrior graves in the chronological phase

destruction in cremation graves increased again in the next phase (fig. 4). Observable changes could have been caused by the arrival of a new wave of migrants in LT B2/C1, when new cemeteries were founded and new types of female jewellery appeared (Bujna 2004, 331).

It is not possible to identify any tendencies in weapon deformation, and gentle and severe bending is represented in all phases. However, simple traces of fire without any deformation are common from LT B2/C1 for both territories (fig. 5).

First graves with intentionally fragmented pottery appeared in Malé Kosihy in chronological stage LT B1/B2 (early cremation graves 28 and grave 62) and continued until the end of burying at the cemetery in chronological stage LT C1c. With the exception of the early grave 62, most of warrior graves with intentionally fragmented pottery appeared only from LT C1a-b. The grave 31 is controversial because fragmentation of pottery was probably caused during the secondary ritual after opening of the grave.

Most graves from Transdanubia in which secondarily burnt or fragmented pottery was found appeared also in LT B2/C1. Secondary burning was identified in all graves in Ponětovice, which are included in LT C1b-c. Two warrior graves from Brno- Chrlice (grave 9) and Kobylnice (grave 9) belong to the same phase.

Intentionally destroyed jewellery and pottery

Deformed jewellery or clothing fittings were not very common in the graves of warriors. Only four examples were identified among the analysed graves from the Middle Danube region – the grave 27 from Dubník (a bronze ring), the grave 32 from Maňa (a glass bracelet), the grave 545 from Holiare (a bronze anklet) and the grave 879 from Ludas (an iron bracelet).

The grave 545 from the Holiare cemetery contained a rare find of a pair of bronze anklets deformed by fire and lance which also had some traces of fire (Benadik/Vlček/Ambros 1957, 93). We have to be cautious about the presence of the lance, however, since only the socket was preserved. Various explanations for this kind of grave deposition are possible. Supposedly it was a double cremation grave of a warrior and a woman related to him in some way. It could have also been the grave of a warrior, whilst the anklets could be a gift from a mourning wife. An opposite explanation is possible as well.

During the cremation the mourners took part in funeral banquets which are supported by literary sources and archaeological finds (Green 1992, 107, 108). These banquets probably took place close to the burial pyre. It is very likely that intentionally fragmented vessels were

used for the purposes of the burial ceremony and the feast. During or after the feast they were smashed and all or just a part of fragments were put into the grave pit.

While the custom of intentional destruction of pottery was not very common among the Celts in the Middle Danube region, it was identified in almost 79% of the analysed graves from Malé Kosihy. Graves with destroyed pottery were evenly distributed among the other graves in the cemetery. Some graves contained completely destroyed pottery inventory. On the other hand, several graves contained whole vessels with some sherds of the intentionally destroyed pottery. Fragments of intentionally broken vessels were mostly found on the bottom of the grave pit, scattered or along the walls. The deposition of pottery fragments depended also on the manner of deposition of cremated human remains. Pottery fragments appeared in the concentration of burnt bones (mostly in cremations with scattered ashes) or outside this concentration (deposition of bones on the pile). A situation uncovered in the grave 31 in Malé Kosihy suggests that possible pottery destruction might have been the result of the secondary opening of the grave (*Bujna 1995, 24, 25; Abb. 11*).

Bowls and flasks are prevalent among destroyed vessels. They were also the principal types of preserved vessels in all analysed cremation graves in the Middle Danube region. There is, however, a small difference in dimensions between preserved and fragmented vessels. Besides intentionally broken vessels, secondarily burnt vessels were observed in graves also. They mostly appeared in Moravia, where all graves from Ponětovice contained secondarily burnt pottery fragments from various types of vessels. There is just one example of a warrior's grave with secondarily burnt pottery known from south-western Slovakia. Sherds of the flask with the stamp decoration deformed by the fire were deposited on several spots outside of the concentration of cremated human remains on the bottom of the grave 62 from Malé Kosihy (*Bujna 1995b, 28, 29, Abb. 13b*). One warrior's grave with secondarily burnt vessel was identified in Transdanubia. A remarkable find is the grave 1 from Balatongyörök in which the remains of the black, tar-like substance (probably the pitch) were identified on the inner surface of the secondarily burnt flask. It was probably burnt together with the dead body and might have released a pleasant smell during cremation (*Horváth 1987, 68, 69; Peškař/Ludikovský 1978, 72-75*).

Possible interpretation of behaviour and factors of influence

The custom of the intentional destruction of inventory is not exclusive for the La Tène Period. It had appeared already in the Late Bronze Age (Urnfield cultures), in the Hallstatt period and continues over the following periods. Fire deformed objects were documented in cremation graves from the Stanzendorf cemetery belonging to the Kalenderberg culture (*Rebay 2006*) and cemeteries of the Vekerzug culture in Chotín (*Dušek 1966; Kozubová 2013*) and Tápioszelé (*Párducz 1966*). Although secondarily burnt pottery was more common in Stanzendorf, the custom of intentional destruction of pottery was more typical for cremation graves of the Vekerzug culture.

The intentional destruction of inventory can be interpreted as a ritual connected with the transition into the afterlife and the symbolism of transformation through the purifying power of the fire. The ritually bent weapons from the Middle Danube region were deposited only in the cremation graves. The same results came from the research of Dragoș Măndescu for the territory of Transylvania (*Măndescu 2012, 347*).

Various interpretations of the custom of intentional destruction of weapons have their own weaknesses. Some scholars suggest that long weapons such as swords were simply too big to be put into the grave pit. This explanation seems unfounded as the analysis of the size of cremation graves has not shown any significant difference in length and width of the grave pits. The weapons could have been demonstratively destroyed in front of the burial participants from practical reasons, that is, to prevent possible robbery of the grave (*Pinter 2001, 56-58*). In this case, however, one needs to ask the question why were the weapons in

other graves left untouched.

This custom may represent ritual behaviour related to the individual character of the artefact. Mark Pearce suggested that some swords and lances carried a part of the warrior's soul. He argues that some of Celtic swords were decorated with anthropomorphic features, such as eyes and face, or they were punch-marked with a personal name (Pearce 2013), and they must have been destroyed after their owner's death. Such a 'personalized' sword was also found in Slovakia. The grave 1 (tumulus 8) in Zemplín contained a sword which was marked [V]TILICI[O] in Latin letters. It is, however, unclear if it is the name of its owner, maker or the sword itself (Pleiner/Scott 1993, 80, 97, 98, fig. 11).

In some cases the custom of intentional destruction of grave inventory can be traced to the fear of the dead, especially if it was connected with the secondary opening of the grave. These practices include not only the final outcome of the funeral that can be seen in the archaeological context, but also rituals that prevent the return of the dead and secure his/her transition into the afterlife. This can be a possible explanation of the ritual uncovered in the grave 31 in the Malé Kosihy cemetery. The whole inventory of the grave has its origins in the western territory of the Celtic world. Particularly exceptional is a sword with a scabbard with stamp decoration and what is possibly a fragment of the helmet (Bujna 1995a, 259, 260, 267; fig. 2: 4a-e, 3: 15a-l; 1995b, 125, 126, Taf. 6: 4a-d). Unusual inventory in the grave is a strong evidence for the foreign origin of the buried person. Therefore the final outcome of the grave can be related to the fear of the community members who performed the burial.

The elements of the ritual belong to the sphere of superstition and religious motivation (Berecki 2006, 64). Weapons can be seen as a symbolic extension of the warrior's arm and thus they became a part of the body that was 'killed' after his death (Rustoiu 2008, 91). This, of course, raises a question: Why can we observe this custom only in some warrior graves? What could have possibly influenced the use of the ritual? These questions are particularly important when one analyses cremation graves with damaged goods. The custom is not connected to any visible archaeological feature detected. The graves that contained intentionally destroyed objects were similar to the graves with preserved weapons - this includes the dimensions of the grave pit, quality and quantity of the grave goods or the age group of the buried individuals.

The graves with the deformed grave goods were evenly distributed in the analysed cemeteries. There was no visible effort of the community to exclude these individuals from others and there is no visible connection between the graves with destroyed inventory from the chronological, spatial, material or the anthropological point of view. Presumably the intentional destruction of inventory was a ritual of a certain social group (family/clan). In this sense, the DNA and isotope analysis can be helpful and suggest possible relations between buried individuals or nonlocal population. Such analyses were already performed on the graves from Nebringen and Monte Bibebe (Scheeres et al. 2013), and from Radověšice and Kutná Hora (Scheeres et al. 2014).

Conclusions

Intentional destruction of inventory is one of the most interesting phenomena connected with the Celtic burial rite. In the Middle Danube Region this custom was limited only to the cremation graves. In the western Celtic territories, however, it was quite common for the inhumation graves. The differences can be identified not only in analysed areas but also in the graves within a single cemetery in the Middle Danube Region. Intentional destruction of inventory was identified only in some graves in the analysed cemeteries which, belong to various chronological phases.

In the warrior graves the destruction of weapons (swords, lances) and armour (shield buckles) was the most common manifestation of this custom. The weapon destruction was identified in 51 % of the analysed cremation warrior's graves. The variability of the

deformation was very high (fig. 1, 2). There were no distinct differences among the studied areas considering the manner of destruction. The swords were deformed mostly in scabbards. They were bent or fragmented, although fragmentation of weapons was identified only in four graves from Malé Kosihy. The lances were deformed very often (bent in the middle of the leaf or fragmented). Fragmentation of weapons was identified only in Malé Kosihy.

Besides metal artefacts, pottery was also intentionally destroyed by secondary burning and fragmentation. It could have been connected to the funeral banquets, which probably took place close to the funeral pyre. Pottery destruction was not very common in the analysed cremation graves. This could have been caused by inadequate insufficient methods of excavation or documentation (quite common in excavations from the first half of the 20th century). It is worth mentioning that the secondarily burnt vessels appeared in all graves from Ponětovice (Moravia). Fragmentation of vessels was identified in 79% of cremation graves from Malé Kosihy.

First cremation graves with intentionally destroyed inventory appeared in the Middle Danube Region in LT B1, when only weapons and pottery deformation was identified. Damaged jewellery and clothing fittings were found in the graves from LT B2. Chronological analysis shows some differences between the areas of south-western Slovakia and Transdanubia. A significant change in the analysed custom is observable in the LT B2/C1 phase which is associated with the arrival of a new wave of migrants to the Middle Danube Region. This is supported by the foundation of new cemeteries and the appearance of new types of female jewellery.

The reason why the ritual practice was limited to selected members of the community could have been their symbolic separation from others in order to separate their social group. The individuals buried in the graves with damaged goods were therefore connected by a common social bond (family/clan), social status or membership of a particular group. The used rituals and the burial were strongly influenced by cosmology, religion and superstitious beliefs.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Professor J. Bujna for kindly discussing and helpful comments during my research. The conclusions of this research are an integral part of my PhD thesis "*The Variability of the Burial Rite and Issue of Cultural Image of the Iron Age in the Middle Danube Region*" at the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra.

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RESUMÉ

Intencionálne ničenie inventára v keltských bojovníckych hrobach zo stredného Podunajska

Zvyk intencionálneho poškodzovania inventára žiarových hrobov je fenomén, ktorý sa v rôznej miere objavuje na všetkých analyzovaných keltských pohrebiskách v priestore stredného Podunajska. Tento zvyk nie je charakteristický len pre mladšiu dobu železnú. Stretávame sa s ním už na pohrebiskách kultúr popolnicových polí a pokračuje aj v neskorších obdobiach. So zámerným poškodzovaním inventára sa na sledovaných pohrebiskách stretávame takmer výlučne v žiarových hrobach, aj keď na iných územiach sa s jeho prejavmi stretávame aj v prípade kostrových hrobov. Identifikované boli tri hlavné spôsoby deštrukcie kovových predmetov: deformácia so stopami ohňa (čiastočná alebo úplná); stupeň deformácie ovplyvňoval následnú identifikáciu predmetu; ohýbanie, deformácia originálneho tvaru predmetu; fragmentarizácia – zámerné lámanie predmetu.

Zvyk rituálneho ničenia zbraní bol v keltských žiarových hrobach pomerne častý. Tomuto fenoménu sa vo svojich prácach venovalo viacero bádateľov (*Buchwald 2005*, 121; *Măndescu 2012*; *Pleiner/Scott 1993*, 161). Do databázy bolo zahrnutých 77 bojovníckych hrobov z 15 keltských pohrebísk. V takmer 51 % z nich boli identifikované zámerne ničené zbrane a súčasti výzbroje. Podiel hrobov s poškodenými zbraňami z územia Slovenska a Zadunajska mierne rozdielny. Z územia Moravy a Dolného Rakúska pochádza len veľmi malý počet žiarových bojovníckych hrobov (9 hrobov).

Môžeme rozlíšiť niekoľko základných typov poškodzovania zbraní a súčastí výzbroje. V niekoľkých prípadoch boli identifikované stopy ohňa bez výraznejšej deformácie predmetu, avšak najčastejším typom deformácie mečov bolo ohnutie čepele. Toto bolo uskutočňované viacerými spôsobmi – esovite ohnuté; 2 až 4-krát; ohnutie približne v strede; zvinutie čepele jedným smerom/zrolovanie; jemne zvlhčená čepeľ (obr. 1). Vo väčšine hrobov bola spolu s mečom prítomná aj pošva, ktorá bola prevažne ohnutá spolu s mečom. Fragmentácia zbraní a výzbroje bola identifikovaná len na pohrebisku v Malých Kosihách (hroby 6, 31, 75 a 453).

Prvé hroby s dokladmi intencionálneho poškodzovania inventára sa v priestore stredného Podunajska objavujú od stupňa LT B1. Prevažne išlo o hroby bojovníkov s deformovanými zbraňami a súčastami výzbroje. V západokeltskom prostredí sa rituálne ničenie inventára žiarových hrobov objavuje už vo včasnotaténskom období (napr. hrob 7 na pohrebisku v Nebringene; *Krämer 1964*, 26, Taf. 10A: 1).

Podrobnejšia chronologická analýza tohto zvyku na sledovaných pohrebiskách v priestore stredného Podunajska je komplikovaná najmä malým počtom hrobov patriacich do stupňov LT B1 a LT B1/B2. Všetky žiarové hroby z územia Moravy, v ktorých sa nachádzali poškodené zbrane patria do stupňa LT C1 (presnejšie fáza LT C1b-c). Malý počet žiarových hrobov

z územia Dolného Rakúska prakticky vylúčil možnosť akejkoľvek podrobnej chronologickej analýzy. Preto boli hodnotené len žiarové hroby z územia juhozápadného Slovenska a Zadunajska. Medzi týmito dvoma regiónmi môžeme pozorovať viacero rozdielov v rámci zvyku zámerného poškodzovania hrobového inventára. V stupni LT B2 obsahovalo viac ako 50 % analyzovaných bojovníckych hrobov deformované zbrane. Zatiaľ čo v hroboch z územia juhozápadného Slovenska môžeme od prechodného stupňa LT B2/C1 sledovať postupné ustupovanie tohto zvyku, v hroboch zo Zadunajska sledujeme po menšom ústupe zvyku opätovný nárast počtu hrobov s poškodenými zbraňami (obr. 4). Tieto zmeny by mohli súvisieť s príchodom novej vlny keltských migrantov, ktorá prichádza do oblasti stredného Podunajska v priebehu prechodného stupňa LT B2/C1. Ich príchod je doložený nielen zakladaním nových pohrebísk, ale aj objavením sa nových druhov ženského šperku (Bujna 2004, 331). Nie je možné identifikovať určitý druh deformácie zbraní ako typický prejav pre určitý chronologický stupeň vývoja (obr. 5). Všetky typy deformácie sú prítomné počas celého obdobia pochovávaní na keltských pohrebiskách.

Na sledovaných keltských pohrebiskách v stredodunajskom priestore sa s týmto zvykom stretávame len v žiarových hroboch. Podobný záver publikoval aj D. Măndescu pre územie Transylvánie (Măndescu 2012, 347).

Vysvetlení zvyku zámerného poškodzovania výbavy žiarových hrobov bolo v literatúre uvedených niekoľko. Zbrane mohli byť ničené demonštratívne pred účastníkmi pohrebných rituálov z jednoduchých praktických dôvodov, aby predišli následnému vykrádaniu hrobov (Pinter 2001, 56-58). Zbraň ako taká predstavovala symbolické predĺženie bojovníckej paže. Vytvárala s jeho telom jeden celok, ktorý musel byť po jeho smrti zničený (Rustoiu 2008, 91). Ak by tomu tak bolo, prečo môžeme sledovať tento zvyk len vo vybraných bojovníckych hroboch? Podľa viacerých bádateľov súvisí rituálne ničenie inventára hrobov so strachom, ktorý vyvolávala smrť určitých jedincov v komunite. Keďže rituály boli motivované nielen náboženskými predstavami, ale aj poverčivosťou jednotlivých členov komunity je ťažké identifikovať ich pôvodný zámer.

Obrazová príloha

Obr. 1. Rôzne typy deformácie mečov. A - Dubník, hrob 27 (podľa Bujna 1989, Taf. XXVII: B-6); B - Ludas, hrob 703 (podľa Szabó/Tankó 2012, Pl. XVI: 1); C - Pottenbrunn, hrob 1005 (podľa Ramsel 2002, Taf. 80: 7a); D - Ludas, hrob 879 (podľa Szabó/Tankó 2012, Pl. XXI: 1). Rôzne mierky

Obr. 2. Rôzne typy deformácie kopijí. A - Dubník, hrob 15 (podľa Bujna 1989, Taf. XII: B-4); B - Ludas, hrob 879 (podľa Szabó/Tankó 2012, Pl. XXII: 1); C - Ludas, hrob 1005 (podľa Szabó/Tankó 2012, Pl. XXXIII: 2). Rôzne mierky

Obr. 3. Rôzne príklady ohnutia štítových pučlic. A - Chotín X, hrob 27/72 (podľa Ratimorská 1981, Tab. XXB: 4); B - Ludas, hrob 879 (podľa Szabó/Tankó 2012, Pl. XXIII: 2); C - Ludas, hrob 1056 (podľa Szabó/Tankó 2012, Pl. XLII: 8). Rôzne mierky

Obr. 4. Chronologická analýza poškodzovania zbraní v žiarových hroboch bojovníkov z územia Slovenska a Zadunajska. Číslo v zátvorke označuje počet bojovníckych hrobov v určitej chronologickej fáze.

Obr. 5. Poškodzovanie zbraní v analyzovaných keltských žiarových hroboch zo Slovenska (S) a Zadunajska (T). Číslo v zátvorke označuje počet bojovníckych hrobov v určitej chronologickej fáze.

Tabela 1. Analyzované keltské pohrebiská z regiónu stredného Podunajska.

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