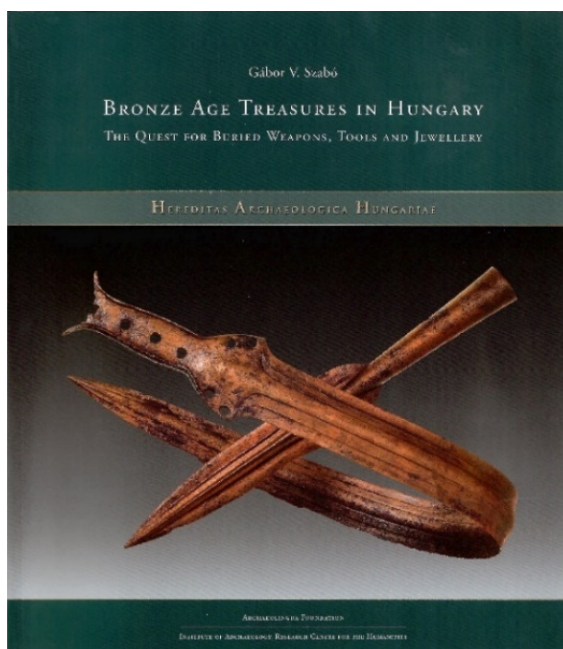


## RECENSIONE

**Gábor V. Szabó, *Bronze Age Treasures in Hungary. The Quest for Buried Weapons, Tools and Jewellery*, Hereditas Archaeologica Hungariae, Archaeolingua Foundation. Institute of Archaeology, Research Centre for the Humanities, 2019, Budapest, 244 pp., ISBN: 978-615-5766-25-1, ISSN: 2498-6542**

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The book "*Bronze Age Treasures in Hungary. The Quest for Buried Weapons, Tools and Jewellery*" by Gábor V. Szabó, Associate Professor at the Institute of Archaeological Science of the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest doubtless represents an extraordinary step forward in Bronze Age research concerning metal accumulation and deposition, as well as an example of good practice for the recovery and protection of archaeological remains from the private illicit activities of amateur metal detectorists, collectors and antiquaries.

Szabó's publication is the outcome of an outstanding research project launched in 2006, also funded by the NFKI-OTKA (National Research, Development and Innovation Office, grant 112427), which aimed to detect, document, and analyse protohistoric bronze and gold hoards from the Hungarian territory, with the direct involvement of private metal detectorists in the institutional research led by the ELTE University. Exploring 52 sites with traces of Late Bronze Age occupation (e.g. hillforts), the team was able to discover 39 hoards in their original deposition context and, in addition, approximately 4000 single metal finds, not only of the LBA, but also of subsequent periods.

The book is structured in 7 chapters and opens with a historiography of the archaeological studies on hoards in Hungary, which also provides interesting events related to the most prominent finds from the 19th and 20th century. The central body of the work is subdivided into 5 thematic chapters (from 2 to 6), which include the description and a preliminary interpretation of 18 among the most significant discovered hoards, dated between the 14th and 10th centuries. Each find is illustrated in detail, with colour pictures, documenting not only the artefacts, but also the

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excavation context and the local landscape. Most of the unearthened hoards are situated in the mountain regions of the North Hungarian Range, four of them from the Tisza basin in the eastern part Great Hungarian Plain, and one from north Transdanubia. In the last chapter, Szabó discusses the new evidence from Hungary in the larger framework of metal accumulation in LBA Europe, and in light of the *vexata quaestio* about the economic or votive function of hoards among Bronze Age societies.

From the point of view of Italian scholarship, Szabó highlights the important comparisons between Pázmándfalu and Pila del Brancon hoards (p. 192, fig. 178), in which Reutlingen/Cetona/Naue II-type swords were found folded/defunctionalized in a strikingly similar way. Another parallel is made between the large fishhooks found at Telkibánya-Cser-hegy (9.8-11.8 cm in length) and those from Frattesina. Such evidence should not surprise if we consider that the Po plain, the Garda Lake area, and the Middle Danube plain show strong connections at least from the Bell Beaker period and, more intensively, during the Bronze Age (e.g. CARDARELLI *et alii* 2020; CAVAZZUTI *et alii* 2022; JANKOVITS 2015, 2020; NEUMANN 2009; PABST 2018; TARBAY 2019). The book is one of the last chapters of a long and consolidated interest in Hungary for the documentation and study of Bronze Age metallurgy and its social implications (e.g. KISS 2020; MOSZOLICS 1985; SZEVERÉNYI, KISS 2018; TARBAY 2022; TARBAY, MITROVIĆ 2022).

Concerning the important achievements of lead isotopic analysis for tracking the provenance of copper, most notably of the Hajdúsámson and Apa hoards (PERNICKA 2013; PERNICKA *et alii* 2016), we expect that these new findings will soon be investigated from this perspective. We will therefore have the great opportunity of examining the circulation of models (types) and objects, together with metal flow trajectories.

The publication does not present a catalogue of the objects, nor analytical work on the assemblage. Obviously, Szabó's project is still at an early stage. No doubt that such an extraordinary corpus of materials will be targeted by extensive analyses in the next years.

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