

## A small bronze hoard from “Kronstadt-Galgenberg“. A contribution to the understanding of cultural landscapes in Middle Bronze Age southeastern Transylvania<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** *The article discusses a hoard of two flanged axes from Braşov (Kronstadt, Brásó), which until now has been largely overlooked. The axes date to the transition from the Early to the Middle Bronze Age (horizon Bühl-Ackenbach/MD I). As the find spot can be localized accurately, an attempt is made to re-integrate the hoard into the cultural landscape of the Wietenberg Culture in the area which is nowadays occupied by the town of Braşov.*

**Keywords:** Carpathian Basin, Bronze Age, Hoard, Flanged Axe, Cultural Landscape

The fate of many Bronze Age hoards of the Carpathian Basin and beyond is to be found by chance, without scientific observations on the find circumstances and the exact find spot. As a vast amount of finds was discovered at a time when the consciousness for the scientific value of complete find ensembles and their contexts had not spread widely, finds were often split up and “doublets” or all pieces distributed to people interested, sold to collectors or, in the worst case, given to founders for re-melting. As hoarding has in the last decades been recognized as a structured, religiously motivated phenomenon<sup>2</sup>, one is thus confronted with a considerable loss of information affecting one of the key sources on Bronze Age worldviews. Not only chronologically and / or regionally differing rules on the categories of included objects have been revealed, but also the placement of finds in the cultural landscape has been stressed as a key factor in this discussion<sup>3</sup>. Deeper insights into Bronze Age beliefs will partly depend on the amount of information on exact find spots being retrieved from archives, museum inventories or publications. Pursuing this approach, against all odds, in some instances surprisingly valuable new insights can be deduced from ‘old’ finds.

### Two flanged axes from the Vienna University collection

This is the case for two flanged bronze axes from the study collection of the Institut für Ur- und Frühgeschichte of the Vienna University. They entered this collection by acquisition in 1920; prior to this they had been kept in the collection of Richard Böhmker<sup>4</sup>. Their find spot is given unitarily as Kronstadt (Braşov, Brassó)-“Galgenhügel”. Both axes share the same patina, and a search for analogies proves them to be roughly contemporaneous.

1. Flanged axe (fig. 1/1). Rounded neck with square notch, only slightly curved parallel sides; the blade turns outward articulately. The flanges are high, bending inwards and curved, the blade is slightly arched. The axe shows considerable wear, with the lower parts of the flanges flattened due to use and repeated re-sharpening including hammering. Length 10,9 cm, width of neck 2,9 cm, notch 0,4x0,3 cm, width of blade 4,4 cm, max. thickness 1,5 cm, dark-green patina. Inv. no. 26393.

2. Flanged axe (fig. 1/2). Trapezoidal in overall shape, the flanges flat, straight and pointing upwards, not finished after casting (casting seams visible at the small sides, but casting jets removed, not beaten out), and with a big casting defect approximately in the center. Length 10,4 cm, width of neck 2,1 cm, width of blade 3,2 cm, max. thickness 0,8 cm, dark-green patina. Inv. no. 26394.

The first axe (nr. 1) shows signs of prolonged use and re-sharpening. Significant alterations of the original form and length especially in the blade area have thus to be taken into account when looking for analogies. In Romania, a very similar axe is known from Retevoieşti, jud. Argeş, discovered as a

<sup>1</sup> Thanks are due to Dr. Alois Stuppner for the possibility to publish the two axes from the study collection of the Institut für Ur- und Frühgeschichte of the Vienna University and Mrs. Violetta Reiter M.A. for information on the pieces. I further have to thank Dr. Alix Hänsel and Mrs. Katja Vollert for information on the pieces of the gold hoard from Braşov kept until 1945 in the Museum for Pre- and Protohistory Berlin.

<sup>2</sup> C.f. Hundt 1955; von Brunn 1981; Geißlinger 1984; Willroth 1985; Hansen 1991; Hansen 1994; Sommerfeld 1994; Hänsel/Hänsel 1997; Maraszek 1998; Fontijn 2002; Hansen 2005; Maraszek 2006; Vachta 2008; Čivilyté 2009; Mörtz 2010; Soroceanu 2011, all with references to further bibliography.

<sup>3</sup> Soroceanu 1995; Fontijn 2002; Hansen 2008; Hansen *et al.* (Hrsg.) 2012.

<sup>4</sup> Katalog Wien 2010, 26.



Fig. 1: The flanged axes from the study collection of the Institut für Ur- und Frühgeschichte of the Vienna University (Photos G. Gatteringer, Institut für Ur- und Frühgeschichte, Wien; courtesy of A. Stuppner).

surface find in the area of a settlement of the Middle Bronze Age (MBA) Tei or Verbicioara Cultures<sup>5</sup>. As the MBA in Romanian terminology spans roughly the period between the Central European phases Bronze A1 and C2<sup>6</sup>, this find does not help much to fix the axe from Braşov chronologically. More useful in this respect is an axe that was found as part of a hoard from Sárbogárd, Hungary<sup>7</sup>. It is slightly more slender, but similar in general form and was dated by the associated finds by B. Hänsel to the Early Middle Danubian Bronze Age (MD I)<sup>8</sup>. Hänsel<sup>9</sup> further pointed at slightly younger analogies from Kosziderpadlás II<sup>10</sup>, Zagyvapálfalva<sup>11</sup> and Villars-le-Combe<sup>12</sup> for this axe and compared it also to one of the axes from the hoard of Bühl<sup>13</sup>. E.F. Mayer grouped similar axes in his type Salzburg<sup>14</sup>. The most important context for this axe type from Austria is the hoard from Niederosterwitz, which consisted of at least 80, maybe even 170 axes<sup>15</sup>. Using typological similarities between this find and the hoards from Bühl and Sárbogárd, Mayer proposed a hoard horizon “Bühl-Niederosterwitz” for his working area, which equals Hänsel’s horizon MD I as a transitional phase between the Early and Middle Bronze Age<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Vulpe 1975, 65, nr. 332, pl. 37/332.

<sup>6</sup> Vulpe 1970, 3.

<sup>7</sup> Hänsel 1968, pl. 23/8; Mozsolics 1967, 158, pl. 36/4.

<sup>8</sup> Hänsel 1968, 67.

<sup>9</sup> Hänsel 1968, 67.

<sup>10</sup> Hänsel 1968, pl. 17/8-10.

<sup>11</sup> Hänsel 1968, pl. 42/28.

<sup>12</sup> Hänsel 1968, 67 with literature.

<sup>13</sup> Rittershofer 1983, 189, fig. 1/6, 34/9.

<sup>14</sup> Mayer 1977, 100-101.

<sup>15</sup> Mayer 1977, 67, nr. 189-209.

<sup>16</sup> Mayer 1977, 101.

In his monographic treatise of the hoard from Bühl, K.-F. Rittershofer listed further exponents of this axe group<sup>17</sup> scattered throughout Europe from Austria in the south to the North Sea and Baltic Sea in the north, the Rhine Valley in the west and the Carpathian Basin in the east, proposing, as already Hänsel, the hoard from Ackenbach as the second characteristic find of the horizon<sup>18</sup>. While all the axes cited by Hänsel, Mayer and Rittershofer clearly belong to one group of forms and may be used to date the axe from Braşov, the closest analogies in form are more restricted; they are specified in list 1. All chronologically relevant find combinations hint at a date at the beginning of the MBA for the axe from Braşov, in the horizon described by Hänsel<sup>19</sup> as MD I for the Carpathian Basin, or Bühl-Ackenbach for southern Central Europe, and elaborated further by Mayer<sup>20</sup> and Rittershofer<sup>21</sup>.

The second axe clearly represents a spoiled casting which was not further processed. This could be a complication to typological categorization, as beating out of the raw form could have altered its appearance considerably; but recent metallographic research by T. Kienlin<sup>22</sup> has proven only minor influences on the general form by post-casting treatment of Early Bronze Age (EBA) axes. Anyway it may be presumed that the small sides and the blade would have been slightly more swung due to peening and the neck would have been hammered flat.

The axe was included by Hänsel in his monograph on the chronology of the Middle Bronze Age of the Carpathian Basin<sup>23</sup>, but not illustrated<sup>24</sup>. He placed it in one type with axes from Dunakömlőd<sup>25</sup>, Tibolddaróc<sup>26</sup>, Barca<sup>27</sup>, Všechsvätych<sup>28</sup>, Vatin<sup>29</sup> and Tručevac<sup>30</sup>, describing the group as "flanged axes with straight sides broadening continuously down to the cutting edge", substantiating further that these axes form variant A of the type, described as "broad, with flat flanges". Hänsel<sup>31</sup> pointed at the close affinity of these axes with the Neyruz type defined originally by E. Vogt<sup>32</sup>, and argued for the constriction of this type to Bz A1 to be widened considerably. The axes from Tručevac form part of a hoard found in a pot of the early Vattina Culture, which should be earlier than MDI according to Hänsel, a date also to be presumed for the settlement finds from Tibolddaróc and Barca, which belong to the Füzesabony-Otományi Culture<sup>33</sup>. The axe from Dunakömlőd, associated with flat and shaft-hole axes in a hoard, was seen as considerably older by Hänsel<sup>34</sup> and put by A. Mozsolics<sup>35</sup> in her horizon II (Kömlőd-Ercsi), pre-dating the Hajdúsámson-Apa horizon.

Mayer could show the chronological span and spatial distribution of the Neyruz type to be even larger<sup>36</sup>. His account starts with a piece from a hoard found in level IV of the tell of Ezero in Bulgaria<sup>37</sup> and includes finds from upper and middle Italy in the south to the middle Rhine valley in the north and Bulgaria, Slovakia and Hungary in the east, with a main concentration in western Switzerland and southeastern France, dating mainly to the EBA but appearing still in the MBA<sup>38</sup>. V. Kločko mentions

<sup>17</sup> Rittershofer 1983, 189-193, 377-378, list 2; his type 2.

<sup>18</sup> Rittershofer 1983, 326-337.

<sup>19</sup> Hänsel 1968.

<sup>20</sup> Mayer 1977.

<sup>21</sup> Rittershofer 1983.

<sup>22</sup> Kienlin 2007, 6-8.

<sup>23</sup> Hänsel 1968, 193, list 54, nr. 4.

<sup>24</sup> Hänsel gives the inventory number 26393, anyway taking into account the description of the type and the illustrations of the analogies clearly the second axe from Vienna is meant.

<sup>25</sup> Roska 1957, fig. 1/2; Mozsolics 1967, 143, pl. 1/1-8.

<sup>26</sup> Balász 1907, 264, fig. 2.

<sup>27</sup> Hänsel 1968, 234, pl. 8/36

<sup>28</sup> Pástor 1965, 40, fig. 5/4.

<sup>29</sup> Hänsel 1968, 239, pl. 15/11-12.

<sup>30</sup> Garašanin 1954, 11, pl. IV/1; Hänsel 1968, 239, pl. 13/12-15.

<sup>31</sup> Hänsel 1968, 66.

<sup>32</sup> Vogt 1948.

<sup>33</sup> Hänsel 1968, 66.

<sup>34</sup> Hänsel 1968, 66-67.

<sup>35</sup> Mozsolics 1967, 121, 143, pl. 1/1-8.

<sup>36</sup> Mayer 1977, 71-76.

<sup>37</sup> Mayer 1977, 73-74.

<sup>38</sup> Mayer 1977, 73-75.

several similar pieces from the territory of the Ukraine<sup>39</sup>; J. Říhový<sup>40</sup> has described the type for Moravia, Z. Žeravica<sup>41</sup> added a few pieces from Bosnia and Dalmatia. The wide regional and chronological distribution of similar finds was sustained and supplemented recently by F. Klimscha<sup>42</sup>.

For Romania, similar axes have been collected by A. Vulpe<sup>43</sup>. He describes three variants (Partoș, Ațel, Șincai) according to subtle variations of the basic form and confirms the large chronological variability of the finds starting with a copper axe found in a Glina III grave at Ploiești-*Triaj*<sup>44</sup>. Later pieces include three axes connected to the Wietenberg Culture, one coming possibly from the eponymous site at Sighișoara-Wietenberg<sup>45</sup>, one found nearby a settlement at Vârghiș<sup>46</sup> and one from the settlement of Tilișca<sup>47</sup>, which possibly formed a small hoard with a knife (c.f. list 2). The youngest context mentioned by Vulpe is the Ha A1 hoard of Șpălnaca II<sup>48</sup>, which includes besides the flanged axe also other considerably earlier objects. In this big and chronologically heterogeneous group, the axe from Brașov finds some close matches in form, which are detailed in list 2.

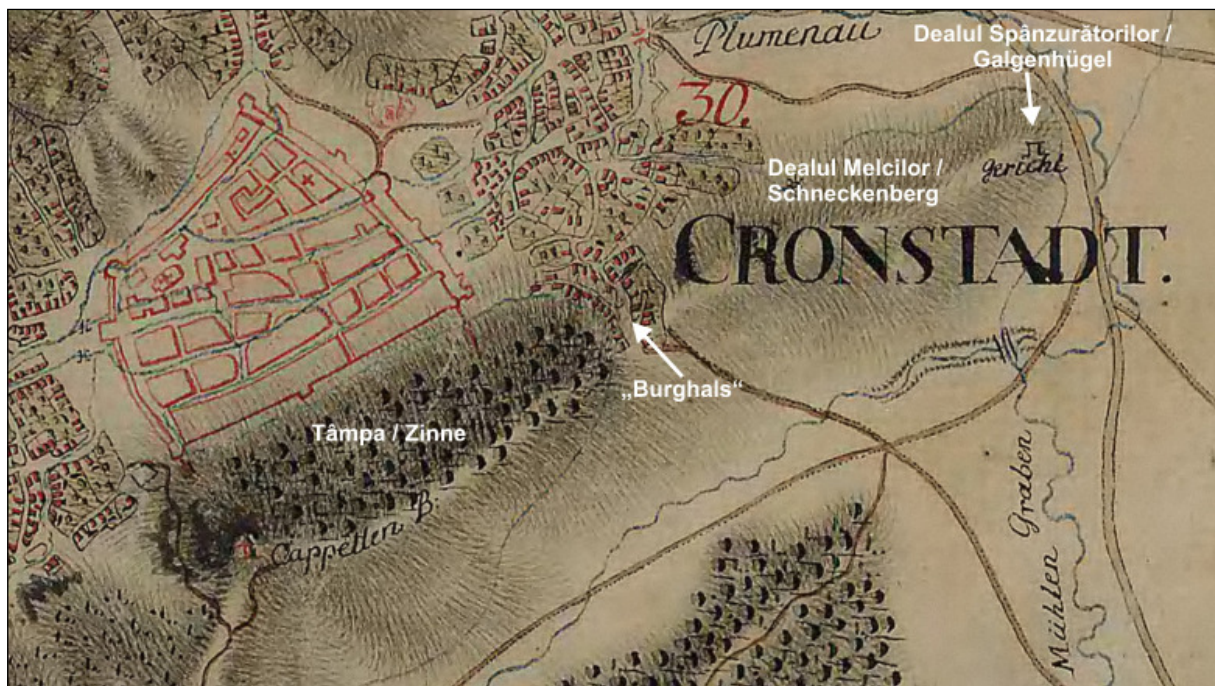


Fig. 2: Localization of the Galgenhügel ('Gericht'), the find spot of the hoard, on map sheet 274 of the Josephinian survey.

From these analogies a date in the rough span between MD I and MD III/SD I, i.e. the Bühl-Ackenbach horizon and Bz C seems to emerge for the second axe from Brașov. This quite big timespan is largely due to general problems in dating MBA metalwork in the Carpathian Basin, as hoard finds from this epoch are few and contain a fixed and very limited range of forms<sup>49</sup>, which is not easy to correlate with the finer chronological schemes elaborated based on pottery styles; an integrative approach to bronzes from settlements is missing so far.

An argument in plus for fixing the axe discussed here chronologically are certain resemblances

<sup>39</sup> Klochko 2012, fig. 4/3 [Khyľ'chytsi], 6/5 [Volodar], 6/11 [Volyn oblast], 6/15 [Bandurkyns'kyi hoard].

<sup>40</sup> Říhový 1992, 79-80.

<sup>41</sup> Žeravica 1993, 63-64.

<sup>42</sup> Klimscha 2010.

<sup>43</sup> Vulpe 1975, 66-67.

<sup>44</sup> Vulpe 1975, 66, nr. 342.

<sup>45</sup> Vulpe 1975, 67, nr. 345.

<sup>46</sup> Vulpe 1975, 67, nr. 352.

<sup>47</sup> Vulpe 1975, 66, nr. 341.

<sup>48</sup> Vulpe 1975, 67, nr. 347.

<sup>49</sup> C.f. for example Mozsolics 1967; Vachta 2008; Soroceanu 2012.

in shape with the so-called Mägerkingen axes, a type defined by B. U. Abels<sup>50</sup> and further elaborated by K. Kibbert<sup>51</sup> and K. Pásthory/E.F. Mayer<sup>52</sup>. These axes are dated to the transition between the Early and the Middle Bronze Age, the Bühl-Ackenbach horizon or MD I in Hänsel's terminology, and the subsequent Lochham horizon<sup>53</sup>. A date for the two axes from Braşov in MD I is thus highly probable.

Just as probable is the assumption that the axes were found together. The patina is the same, the same toponym is given for both pieces and they are contemporaneous<sup>54</sup>. Especially the type axe 2 belongs to shows a clear affiliation with the Wietenberg Culture. This culture inhabits the region around Braşov during the whole Romanian MBA<sup>55</sup>. Southeastern Transylvania at that time is a zone of contact. In a landscape formed of small elongated basins surrounded by hills, influences from the east (Monteoru and Ciomortan/Costişa Cultures<sup>56</sup>) and the south (Tei Culture<sup>57</sup>) mix due to easily accessible passes through the Carpathian bow. It is possible to re-integrate the hoard to a certain degree in its original setting in this complex cultural amalgam, due to a small piece of information registered in the Vienna collection's inventory book.

#### **Micro-regional localization of the find spot**

The inconspicuous addition of the toponym *Galgenberg* or *Dealul Spânzurătorilor* (gallows hill) to the place of origin in the inventory of the Vienna Studiensammlung offers the possibility to reconstruct the find spot of the two axes with surprising exactness. The medieval and early modern landscape of punishment was complex in Braşov, with a diverse set of places for the execution of sentences<sup>58</sup>. The Galgenberg can be located due to written sources accurately. It was placed on an extension of the Schneckenberg (*Dealul Melcilor/Csiga Hegy* -snail hill), the eponymous site of the EBA Schneckenberg Culture, overlooking the road leading to Braşov from Walachia through the Timiş (Tömösch, Tömös) pass<sup>59</sup>. On the hill a gallows constructed of stone lay as well as the house of the executioner and a cemetery for the executed and other persons who could not be buried in holy earth<sup>60</sup>. The gallows was torn down in 1850<sup>61</sup>; its location is confirmed however also by a map sheet of the Josephinische Landesaufnahme (Josephinian survey) of the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which also reveals some more minutiae (Fig. 2). The medieval and early modern settled area of Braşov is limited to the south by the Tâmpa (Zinne, Cenk) Mountain; its eastern extension is the Schneckenberg. Both mountains are divided by a depression with the German toponym "Burghals", through which one access road led to the town. Another road from the south led as stated above around the Schneckenberg's easternmost extension-the Galgenberg, which is marked as "Gericht" in the map. The find spot lies thus on top of a quite prominent hill. This hill slopes down eastwards in the direction of a small stream, which is today part of the Timiş Channel<sup>62</sup>. Today this area lies in the middle of the town and is transformed considerably. The Schneckenberg is surrounded by buildings, on top of it water reservoirs have been constructed; a way which very probably touches the find area winds up to them. Vis-à-vis of the Galgenberg the Braşov county hospital is situated, the small stream now runs partly subterranean (but is still visible in the area around the find spot); the road has kept its importance, today it is the major connection with the Romanian capital Bucureşti.

<sup>50</sup> Abels 1972, 59-62.

<sup>51</sup> Kibbert 1980, 150-156.

<sup>52</sup> Pásthory/Mayer 1998, 59- 63.

<sup>53</sup> Kibbert 1980, 155-156.

<sup>54</sup> I do not intend to enter into the complex debate surrounding the chronological phase MDI/Bühl-Ackenbach here. However the hoard from Braşov re-confirms the chronological association of two axe types of this horizon and shows that the Carpathian Basin took part in the development of flanged axes, which is much better attested in Central Europe due to a hoarding custom which includes-and is really based on-flanged axes, while in southeastern Europe shaft-hole axes take over this role.

<sup>55</sup> Boroffka 1994, 288-290; 258, tabl. 14; in Central Europe terms Bz A-C, or early Bz D.

<sup>56</sup> Cavruc 2001.

<sup>57</sup> Prox 1940.

<sup>58</sup> Damian 2011, 46-49.

<sup>59</sup> Damian 2011, 49.

<sup>60</sup> Damian 2011, 49.

<sup>61</sup> Damian 2011, 49.

<sup>62</sup> The Josephinian survey shows the situation in the second half of the 18th century. It is absolutely clear that the landscape at this point was already transformed to a large degree by human settlement and cannot be projected back into the Bronze Age. But at least it illustrates many characteristics of the landscape which today are not recognizable any more. This concerns especially the existence of many small water courses and swampy areas.





Fig. 3: Localization of Middle Bronze Age find spots in the area of Braşov on map sheets 269 and 274 of the Josephinian survey.

The find spot of the hoard implies that it can be added to a group of hoards discussed extensively by T. Bader, the pass finds<sup>63</sup>. Although not situated directly inside the pass the find marks the way where it exits into the plains, a way whose importance in the MBA is evident from the finds of the Walachian Tei Culture in southeastern Transylvania<sup>64</sup>. Three bronze hoards ranging from the Early to the Late Bronze Age in date are known from the pass as further proof of its use in the Bronze Age<sup>65</sup>.

It is clearly of importance in itself to determine the find spot of the hoard on a hill dominating the course of a pass as it enters the lowlands near a small stream. But due to a significant amount of Bronze Age find spots known mainly as the result of construction activities in the area which is nowadays occupied by the town of Braşov, there is the possibility to get one step closer to the Bronze Age landscape.

<sup>63</sup> Bader 2001.

<sup>64</sup> Prox 1940; Bader 2001, 25.

<sup>65</sup> Bader 2001, 19, nr. 18; Predeal I, EBA-MBA: Soroceanu 2012, 154-155; Sinaia, MBA: Soroceanu 2012, 159-161; Predeal II, LBA: Petrescu-Dîmboviţa 1977, 123-124.

### **A Bronze Age cultural landscape**

Braşov lies in the Braşov depression, in the foothills of the Carpathians and is limited to the south and southeast by the Postăvarul (Schuler, Keresztényhavas) and Piatra Mare Mountains (Hohenstein, Nagyköhavas; cf. Fig. 3 for the following). The Tâmpa Mountain, which today enters and in the Middle Ages limited the settled area, is the extension of the Postăvarul massif of the Carpathian Mountains. Due to its location the town area is characterized by several elevations, which subdivide the landscape and give it the general form of an elongated valley stretching roughly southwest-northeast and opening up into the actual Braşov depression. An analysis of Bronze Age settlement patterns concerns thus not an area randomly defined by the position of a modern town, but a naturally well-delimited geographical micro-region.

13 find spots connected to the Wietenberg, Tei and Monteoru Cultures are known from the valley in which Braşov is situated (list 3). This high number of sites is the positive aspect of the considerable earth-moving activities accompanying the expansion of the city. The negative aspect is that nearly all discoveries are chance finds; many more will have gone unnoticed, and information on the contexts of the existing material is largely missing. For most sites toponyms are given which allow to localize the find spots to some degree. However, in many cases there is the possibility that multiple toponyms may refer in fact to the same find spot (cf. list 3). The total number of discoveries could thus be lower. Few of the find spots can be localized accurately (marked in fig. 3 by smaller points) using old maps which bear the respective toponyms, for others only a wider area in which the find spot lies can be deduced (bigger colored areas in fig. 3).

The map shows two concentrations of settlements. One lies in the north in what is today Braşov's Bartolomeu (Bartholomä, Brassóbertalan) district, where the last foothills of the Carpathians give way to the flat valley. The area encompasses two small rivers and a part of it is marked as swampy in the Josephinian map. In the Middle Ages, one of the settlement cores which were later unified in the city of Braşov developed here around the St. Bartholomew Church<sup>66</sup>. The good possibilities for agriculture in the lowlands combined with easily accessible ways into the plain and the possibility to take refuge in the mountains may have contributed to this choice. Four sites are attested in this area, but as stated above it remains unclear whether some of the finds registered in the Museum of Braşov under different toponyms in reality belong to just one site. Under these circumstances musings on the contemporaneity of single sites do not make sense.

The second cluster of settlements lies in the south of the area inhabited today, in the valley of the small river Răcădău (Rakado) south of the Tâmpa Mountain and the Schneckenberg. From the Răcădău valley several find spots are known, which however share the problem discussed already for the sites from Bartolomeu. A more precise localization is possible for the finds from "Valea Răcădăului-Zementfabrik" (fabrica de ciment, 'cement plant', list 3, nr. 11), and "Calea Bucureştilor" (list 3, nr. 4), the only site excavated more extensively and with secure evidence for houses. The small hoard on the Galgenberg may well be connected to this cluster of sites.

Two more Bronze Age flatland settlements are known from the wider area around Braşov. One lies to the northeast of the town at the southern boundary of the modern village Sânpetru (list 3, Nr. 13). This site has produced no Wietenberg finds, but still may be contemporaneous. The other settlement (list 3, nr. 5) is situated on the terrace of the Timiş River in the area of the former village Dârste, which today forms part of the Noua-Dârste district of Braşov.

The lowlands around Braşov seem to be devoid of settlements, as well as the valley in which most of the modern city is situated. This may be to some degree due to a lack of research in the surroundings of the city, and the intact historical city core areas of Braşov have in their majority not been subject to construction work leading to large-scale earth movements. Anyway, find spots from other periods are known from the area, mostly on the elevations. The area in the valley was swampy to some degree<sup>67</sup>, and the high Tâmpa Mountain may have decreased the hours of sunlight, thus hindering agriculture here. This could have been one reason for the establishment of the settlement cluster in front of the southern Tâmpa slope.

<sup>66</sup> Roth 2010, 20.

<sup>67</sup> Roth 2010, 18.

The placement of all Wietenberg sites in the landscape shares thus some characteristics: the location at running water, but also a position at the last foothills of the Carpathians. This could indicate that the mountains were of importance in the economy of the Wietenberg settlers. Transhumance would be one explication for the strong contacts to the areas east- and southwards of the Carpathians. As stated above, another important aspect may have been the possibility to take refuge in the mountains. That may also be an explanation for the position of the last Wietenberg settlement in the Braşov region to be discussed here.

At “Pietrele lui Solomon” (list 3, nr. 7), a place quite remotely situated up in the foothills of the Carpathians, Wietenberg pottery has been recorded during the excavation of a Dacian hillfort<sup>68</sup>. The site lies in an excellent defensive position with a wide view in several directions and a water supply in the form of several small rivers. No features of the Wietenberg Culture have survived due to later construction activities, but the importance of the site can be deduced from its dominant position. The hilltop settlement was accessible from both settlement clusters in the valley, and it can be proposed, however not proven, that they formed part of one settlement system.

L. Dietrich<sup>69</sup> has recently analyzed the settlement systems of the Wietenberg Culture in detail. She could show that such clusters as observed in Braşov-formed of lowland settlements and a hilltop site situated in a radius of about 5 km-are typical for this culture<sup>70</sup>. She has also hinted at the settlement agglomeration in the city area of Braşov<sup>71</sup>. The hilltop sites are seen as the domicile of elites that control these settlement clusters, which are further marked through depositions of prestige weapons, whether individually or in hoards<sup>72</sup>. For the Braşov cluster this element was missing so far, if one would not accept the axe hoard from Hărman<sup>73</sup>, to the northeast of Braşov as such. Anyway, Dietrich’s<sup>74</sup> map shows this find to be not only at some distance, but also in approximate equidistance to another settlement cluster<sup>75</sup>.

The hoard from the Galgenberg closes this gap for Braşov and adds further proof to Dietrich’s observations. The hoards and single finds highlighted by her as markers of elites in the landscape consist mainly of swords, shaft-hole axes and gold ornaments. The small hoard from Braşov obviously does not fit that pattern, especially if we act on the assumption that the axes were not part of a bigger hoard<sup>76</sup>. Flanged axes are in any case not among the items regularly hoarded in the MBA of the Carpathian Basin<sup>77</sup>, and they may well have been tools instead of arms. Hoards of or with flanged axes are typical for large parts of Central Europe in that time. It is interesting that the predominant autochthonous hoarding pattern seems to have been abandoned here for a foreign one. The position of the Braşov settlement cluster at the exit of the Timiş pass leading to Muntenia would fit well with elites expressing their control over long-distance contacts, and this may have been the prestige aspect involved with the small hoard<sup>78</sup>.

Another nuance and an even firmer connection to the image reconstructed by Dietrich for the Wietenberg Culture’s landscape-organization is added to the settlement cluster of Braşov by a hoard of gold objects (list 3, nr. 12; fig. 4), which has been published remotely and in the following largely overlooked. In a comprehensive study on gold finds from Transylvania, D. Popescu<sup>79</sup> mentions that in 1934 in Braşov a hoard of gold objects was discovered, of which eight lock rings (‘Lockenringe’) and one

<sup>68</sup> Costea 1996.

<sup>69</sup> L. Dietrich 2010.

<sup>70</sup> L. Dietrich 2010, 192, fig. 1.

<sup>71</sup> L. Dietrich 2010, fig. 1.

<sup>72</sup> L. Dietrich 2010, 194-200

<sup>73</sup> Vulpe 1970, 44, nr. 116, 52, nr. 236, 66, nr. 292

<sup>74</sup> L. Dietrich 2010, fig. 2.

<sup>75</sup> This is the case with some of the slightly bigger hoards. Personal dedications of several people from different settlement clusters could be an explanation, as the composition of the hoards conveys the impression of personal belongings of individuals (L. Dietrich 2010, 196-197).

<sup>76</sup> Combinations of shaft-hole axes with flat or flanged axes have a certain tradition in the Romanian EBA/MBA, especially in Muntenia, to the south of the Carpathians, cf. the finds of Râncăciuv, jud. Argeş (Soroceanu 2012, 155-156); Schitu, jud. Giurgiu (Soroceanu 2012, 156-157); Şerbăneşti, jud. Vâlcea (Soroceanu 2012, 157-158). The find of Corbasca, jud. Bacău in Moldova repeats the same scheme, only that the flat axes are made of stone in that case (Soroceanu 2012, 130-131).

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Vulpe 1975, 64-68, nearly all flanged axes from this part of Romania are single or settlement finds.

<sup>78</sup> Dietrich has indicated this aspect regarding southern contacts with reference to the “Mycenaean” swords found in Transylvania; L. Dietrich 2010, 200-202.

<sup>79</sup> Popescu 1956, 203, fig. 121/6-14.



"spiral" ring were preserved. Four rings<sup>80</sup> went into a private collection in București, the other objects entered the collection of the Museum of Pre- and Protohistory in Berlin.

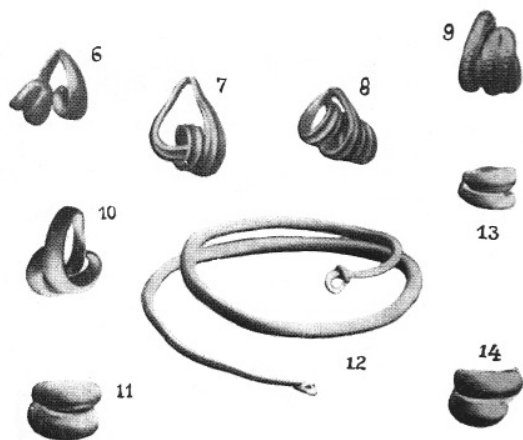


Figure 4: The gold hoard from Brașov (after Popescu 1956, fig. 121/6-14).

After Popescu's publication, the only references to the finds are apparently made by Hänsel<sup>81</sup> and F. Costea<sup>82</sup>. This neglect may be due to the fact that the finds from Berlin were part of the works of art transferred to Russia after the Second World War and have not been accessible for study until recently<sup>83</sup>. The find can be dated easily through the forms of the lock rings. Four pieces (fig. 4/10-11, 13-14) belong to type 2 after B. Hänsel and P. Weihermann<sup>84</sup>, dated between FD III and MD II. Inter alia the form appears in the hoard of Trușevac, which also yields axes similar to axe nr. 2 from Brașov<sup>85</sup>. Another lock ring (fig. 4/6)<sup>86</sup>, type 3 after Hänsel and Weihermann<sup>87</sup>, has a close analogy in the Wietenberg sanctuary of Oarța de Sus, from where also gold rings are known<sup>88</sup> which slightly resemble the one from the hoard from Brașov (fig. 4/12). The gold hoard thus may well be contemporaneous with the Wietenberg settlement

clusters and the bronze hoard from Brașov. This find emphasizes the importance of the settlement clusters in the area of Brașov and gives further proof to the existence of elites like those who are discernible behind the other important gold hoard of the region from Țufalău<sup>89</sup>.

To get back to the hoard from the Galgenberg, its conspicuous placement near the site of a settlement which was of importance in the times preceding the Wietenberg Culture is also of some interest. The Schneckenberg, which dominates the way coming from the Timiș pass and the passage through the 'Burghals' (Fig. 2) apparently changed its meaning from a place of settlement to one of deposition. It may be assumed that the settlement on the Schneckenberg had left some still visible marks on the plateau, and that it was known as an ancient site of importance in the times of the Wietenberg Culture. There is a possibility that through the hoard a memorial place<sup>90</sup> important as a reference point for the Wietenberg Cultures' elites was marked<sup>91</sup>. This does not necessarily imply any kind of direct continuity between the Schneckenberg and Wietenberg Cultures, but just a general notion of the importance of the place and maybe of remembrance of the deeds of those who had inhabited the area before and had formed and now become part of the cultural landscape themselves.

<sup>80</sup> Popescu 1956, fig. 121/6-9.

<sup>81</sup> Hänsel 1968, 221, list 120, nr. 19.

<sup>82</sup> Costea 2004, 36.

<sup>83</sup> Information on the whereabouts of the finds by Dr. Alix Hänsel and Mrs. Katja Vollert, Berlin. The finds seem to have entered the Museum collection already in 1931 (Reference Nr. 606/1931, Entry Journal Nr. EJ.II 19/1931) and were registered under Inventory number II 20/1931 (RE 156) with the location 'Burzenland (Brasso, Komitat; Hungary, Kingdom)'. At the end of the war the finds were confiscated by Russian troops and brought to the Pushkin Museum, Moscow (Inv. Nr. Aap. 1391). The objects from Brașov have recently been published summarily: Tolstikov/Hänsel 2013. It is not possible to state without doubt whether Popescu's localization of the find inside the city of Brașov is more accurate than the information from the Berlin inventory books. It seems anyhow that Popescu had access to more complete information on the find, as the pieces of the hoard which went to București are not mentioned in the Berlin records. The in 1931 or 1934 anachronistic localization of the find in the kingdom of Hungary does not speak in favor of an interest in the exact localization of the find by the writer of the entries in the inventory books.

<sup>84</sup> Hänsel/Weihermann 2000, 17, 19.

<sup>85</sup> Garašanin 1954, 11, pl. IV; Hänsel 1968, 239, pl. 13/1-15; Hänsel/Weihermann 2000, 19.

<sup>86</sup> Popescu 1956, fig. 121/6.

<sup>87</sup> Hänsel/Weihermann 2000, 17, 20.

<sup>88</sup> Kacsó 1987, fig. 22.

<sup>89</sup> Mozsolics 1965-1966, 54-55, pl. 2-3; L. Dietrich 2010, 196.

<sup>90</sup> Hansen 2008, 293-294 on the importance of fixing memories in the landscape.

<sup>91</sup> For the role of hoards in marking special places ("andere Orte") in the landscape see Hansen 2008, esp. 305.

**List 1: Analogies for axe nr. 1**

1. **Bühl**, Kr. Donau-Ries, Bavaria, Germany. One flanged axe from a complex Hoard find made up of tools, weapons, ornaments and raw bronze, often highly fragmented<sup>92</sup>. Horizon Bühl-Ackenbach. Rittershofer 1983, 189, fig. 1/6, 34/9; Pásthory/Mayer 1998, 56, nr. 220, pl. 16/220.

2. **Butzweiler/Kordel, Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany**. Single find. Kibbert 1980, 175, nr. 409, pl. 28/409.

3. **Crailsheim**, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. Circumstances of discovery unknown. Abels 1972, 63, Nr. 427, pl. 30/427; Rittershofer 1983, 377, list 2, nr. 4.

4. **Find spot unknown**, Austria. Mayer 1977, 100, Nr. 302, pl. 21/302.

5. **Herrlisheim**, Dep. Bas-Rhin, France. Circumstances of discovery unknown. Abels 1972, 84, nr. 604, pl. 43/604; Rittershofer 1983, 378, list 2, nr. 5.

6. **Košice**, Slovakia. Circumstances of discovery unclear, maybe from a grave. Novotná 1970, 35, nr. 177, pl. 10/177.

7.  **Retevoiești**, jud. Argeș, Romania. Surface find from the area of a settlement of the Tei or Verbicioara Culture, Romanian Middle Bronze Age. Vulpe 1975, 65, nr. 332, pl. 37/332.

8. **Salzburg-‘Hellbrunner Berg’**, Austria. Settlement find, association with pottery unclear. Hell 1921, 32-38, fig. 3/3; Mayer 1977, 100, Nr. 301, pl. 21/301.

9. **Smogolice**, pow. Stargard Szczeciński, Poland. Hoard find, one complete flanged axe and one fragment in combination with two more flanged axes, two chisels, two daggers, eight armrings, two arm spirals, two arm or leg spirals, two pendants (Brillenanhänger), a bronze fragment and a socketed object. Period II-III. Rittershofer 1983, 377, list 2, nr. 1; Szpunar 1987, 53, nr. 299-300, pl. 16/299-300.

10. **Wollmannsdorf**, Bavaria, Germany. Single find(?). Pásthory/Mayer 1998, pl. 16/225.

**List 2: Analogies for axe nr. 2**

1. **Bandurka**, Mykolajiv'ska Oblast, Ukraine. Hoard of one flanged axe and a two-looped socketed axe, MBA<sup>93</sup>. Klochko 2012, fig. 6/15.

2. **Moravia**, find spot unknown. Říhovský 1992, 79, Nr. 163, pl. 13/163.

3. **Niederosterwitz**, Kärnten, Austria. One axe from a hoard of 80-170 axes<sup>94</sup>. Horizon Bühl-Ackenbach, MD I. Mayer 1977, 72, nr. 214, pl. 216/214.

4. **Șerbănești**, com. Sălătrucel, jud. Vâlcea, Romania. Hoard of one flanged axe and two shaft-hole axes of type B1<sup>95</sup>. Second part of MBA in Romanian terminology (appr. B-C, Tei Culture). Soroceanu 2012, 155, pl. 72/3.

5. **Tilișca**, jud. Sibiu, Romania. Hoard (?)<sup>96</sup> of one flanged axe and a knife inside a Wietenberg Culture settlement. Second part of MBA in Romanian terminology (appr. B-C). Vulpe 1975, 66, nr. 341, 67, pl. 37/341, 60A; Boroffka 1994, 84-85, nr. 460.

6. **Vedrovice**, okr. Znojmo, Czech Republic. Single find. Říhovský 1992, 79, nr. 161, pl. 13/161.

7. **Vârghiș**, jud. Covasna, Romania. Single find next to a settlement of the Wietenberg Culture. MBA in Romanian terms. Vulpe 1975, 67, Nr. 352, pl. 38/352.

**List 3: MBA sites from Brașov**

1. **Brașov “Bartolomeu”** (Bartholomä). Chance finds of pottery of the Wietenberg, Tei and Noua Cultures and of the Hallstatt and La Tène periods during construction work. Prox 1940, 95-96, nr. 6; Boroffka 1994, 26, nr. 81.

2. **Brașov “Bartolomeu-bei der Bahn”**. Pottery discovered during construction work for the railway to Făgăraș. According to Boroffka it is not entirely clear whether this findspot is identical with Brașov “Bartolomeu”, but the finds were inventoried separately in the Museum of Brașov. Boroffka 1994, 26, nr. 82.

3. **Brașov “Bartolomeu-Schottergrube”**. Chance finds of Wietenberg pottery and a vessel of the Monteoru Culture. According to Boroffka it is again not entirely clear whether this findspot is identical

<sup>92</sup> Detailed account: Rittershofer 1983, 353-364.

<sup>93</sup> This early date for the socketed axe is entirely possible: cf. O. Dietrich 2010; Dietrich 2013.

<sup>94</sup> Mayer 1977, 67, nr. 189-209.

<sup>95</sup> Vulpe 1970, 70-77.

<sup>96</sup> It is not entirely clear whether the objects were found together. In any case, both come undoubtedly from the settlement; see Boroffka 1994, 84, nr. 460.

with Braşov "Bartolomeu", but the finds were inventoried separately in the Museum of Braşov. Boroffka 1994, 26, nr.83.

**4. Braşov "Calea Bucureştilor".** A Wietenberg settlement with several houses and pits discovered during a rescue excavation in 1977 previous to the construction of new apartment buildings. Costea 2004, 37, nr. 18.

**5. Braşov-Dârste** (Walkmühlen, Drieste, Derestye; today part of the Noua-Dârste district of Braşov). Settlement discovered by surface finds on the lower terrace of the river Timiş. Costea 2004, 37.

**6. Braşov „Fabrica de Cărămizi Răsăritul”** (Ziegelei Schmidt, Lehmgrube, Hanggestein, Militärschießstätte). Chance finds of pottery of the Wietenberg and Tei Cultures during work in a brickyard in the west-northwest of the Bartolomeu district. Boroffka states that material registered in the Museum of Braşov under all of the toponyms listed above originates from just one find spot. Prox 1940, 96, nr. 7; Boroffka 1994, 26, nr. 87.

**7. Braşov "Pietrele lui Solomon".** Wietenberg pottery discovered during a rescue excavation at a Dacian hillfort. Costea 2004, 36-37, nr. 15.

**8. Braşov "Rakadotal-Burggrund hinter der Zinne".** Chance finds of pottery. Boroffka 1994, 26, nr. 88 (with older literature, where the find spot is given just as Zinne-Tâmpa).

**9. Braşov "Valea Răcădăului"** (Rakadotal). Chance finds of pottery of the Wietenberg and Tei Cultures. Prox 1940, 95, nr. 5; Boroffka 1994, 26, nr. 84.

**10. Braşov "Valea Răcădăului-Militärbad".** Chance finds of pottery of the Schneckenberg, Wietenberg and Tei Cultures on the left bank of the Răcădău river. According to Boroffka it is not entirely clear whether this find spot is identical with Braşov "Valea Răcădăului", but the finds were inventoried separately in the Museum of Braşov. Boroffka 1994, 26, nr. 85.

**11. Braşov "Valea Răcădăului-Zementfabrik".** Surface finds in the garden at the entrance of the cement plant. According to Boroffka it is not entirely clear whether this findspot is identical with Braşov-Valea Răcădăului, but the finds were inventoried separately in the Museum of Braşov. Boroffka 1994, 26, nr. 86.

**12. Braşov-town.** Hoard of gold objects discovered in 1931 or 1934 (Fig. 4), of which 8 lock rings and one ring with spiral ends were preserved. Popescu 1956, 203, fig. 121/6-14; Hänsel 1968, 221, Liste 120, Nr. 19; Costea 2004, 36; Tolstikov/Hänsel 2013.

**13. Sânpetru** (*Petersberg, Barcaszentpéter*). Pottery of the Monteoru and Tei Cultures discovered during construction work for new houses to the right of the street leading to Braşov. Costea 2004, 54, nr. 102a.

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