EARLY BRONZE AGE SETTLEMENT AGGLOMERATION IN MIKULOVICE (EASTERN BOHEMIA). A MICROREGION PROFITING FROM IT'S POSITION ON A LONG DISTANCE ROUTE.

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The site of Mikulovice is situated on the traditional route from Bohemia to Moravia and also to Poland which is also known from Early Medieval written sources. An isolated hillock in Mikulovice which provides a wonderful view of the surrounding Elbe lowland couldn´t be passed unnoticed as far back as in prehistory. At the beginning of the Bronze Age, an intensively settled agglomeration of about 25 km2 arose there.
The newly excavated Early Bronze Age inhumation cemetery with more than 100 graves at the base of the Mikulovice hillock provided an extraordinary chance to find out more about the role of this agglomeration. Despite the relatively small (but intensively) settled area and its location on the periphery of the Bohemian Únětice culture, the graves were very richly equipped and almost half of them contained imported "exotics" and highly valued commodities such as Baltic amber, sea shells, gold, bronze, stone industry etc.
A multi-disciplinary approach to the complex evaluation of the cemetery on the background of the finds from the whole microregion brought new light into our knowledge about the Early Bronze Age society. It has indicated much about the interregional long-distance connections, networks, exchange, trade and mobility of people and objects as well as about the Early Bronze Age. The character of the finds in the connection with the strategic position of the agglomeration indicates that the long-distance route had to be in use already during that time.