

Abstract #: 2152

SOCIAL TRAJECTORIES OF MEDITERRANEAN IMPORT IN THE TRANSALPINE WORLD BETWEEN THE 3RD CENTURY BC AND 2ND CENTURY AD

Daniel Bursak¹, Alžběta Frank-Danielisová¹

¹ *Institution of Archaeology of the CAS, Prague*

In the last years, a significant number of new archaeometric data on metal artefacts from Central European Iron Age and Roman period was collected and analysed. Using methods now considered as “standard” like major and trace element statistics with the lead isotope analysis of bronze and glass artefacts, we often obtained a surprising picture, which in many ways challenged the current view on the function of given items in local societies. We would like to bring into the discussion our experience with an archaeometry analyses from the perspective of archaeologists. Given the complexity of metallurgy, metal distribution and the role of various metal artefacts in the later prehistory, our focus and questions gradually shifted from classical provenance-oriented studies towards more complex questions on the role of artefacts in the society, their relevance as a proxy for mobility, socio-economic studies etc. Since archaeometry seems now to be perceived as an inevitable part of the research approach, our aim is to encourage a discussion on the future role of scientific analyses of artefacts in the complex societies of later prehistory. We would like to develop the process of finding new questions and a deeper and/or more complex involvement of the archaeometric analyses in the future research.

As a medium for our presentation, we selected one of the most conspicuous parts of the archaeological record in the Iron Age and Roman period: the phenomenon of Mediterranean imports. Their distinctiveness has always stood at the forefront of narratives concerning political power, economy and societal networks. Built over the years in the fields of art and cultural history, anthropology and archaeology, the phenomenon of exogenous items in indigenous Iron Age material culture now faces a very significant challenge in its perception due to the rapidly increasing involvement of archaeometric methods.

Keywords

transdisciplinary research, Iron Age, Roman period, isotope studies, social trajectories, long-distance contact

Note/comment