

International Symposium

The role of elites of the 1st millennium BC between Central Europe and Southern Balkans

with the case study of the “Horse and Rider of Babunja”



May 13-15, 2025
Natural History Museum Vienna



Botschaft
der Republik Albanien
Wien



Programme of the International Symposium

The role of elites of the 1st millennium BC between Central Europe and the Southern Balkans with the case study of the "Horse and Rider of Babunja"

May 13 – 15, 2025

Venue of the conference: Natural History Museum Vienna, Room 19, Burgring 7, A-1010 Vienna

Hosts of the conference

Natural History Museum Vienna
Albanian Academy of Sciences

in cooperation with the Ambassador of the Republic of Albania in Austria

Approach and content of the conference

The diverse aspects of the role of members of the elite will be presented and discussed at the conference. The academic discourse on the accompanying material culture, the prestige goods, the corresponding trade routes and communication networks between Central Europe and the Balkans in the 1st millennium BC will be the focus of the conference. In order to embed this in a larger framework, theoretical concepts on social structure and identities in the 1st millennium BC will also be the subject of discussion. Grave finds in particular are able to demonstrate an impressive picture of the differentiated role of elites and their multi-layered social, political and ritual-religious functions, but also the specific roles of female and male elite members on the basis of their specific grave inventories.

The occasion for the conference is the outstanding bronze statuette of the so-called "Horse and Rider of Babunja", a settlement near Apollonia of Illyria, located in present day Albania. Discovered during the Albanian-German research excavations in 2018, the artwork is now to be presented to the public at the Natural History Museum Vienna in 2025 following its subsequent restoration at the Getty Museum in the USA and its return to Europe. The statuette, which was made in a Greek workshop in the Late Archaic period around 510–490 BC, is a unique artistic masterpiece of Greek bronze sculpturing. Although the person on horseback is carrying weapons, the stylistic (iconographic) peculiarities of archaism make it unclear whether it is a horseman or perhaps even a horsewoman. The outstanding statuette also offers a good opportunity to discuss the interaction of Greek Poleis and settlements with the local inhabitants and especially their elites.



Conference Programme

Tuesday 13th May 2025

From 12:00 Registration Conference Office, Lecture Hall, Natural History Museum Vienna

Greeting Words and Introduction

13:00–13:20 **Katrin Vohland**, General Director and Scientific CEO of the Natural History Museum Vienna, Austria
Fate Velaj, Ambassador of the Republic of Albania in Austria
Adem Bunguri, Institute of Archaeology, Academy of Sciences of Albania
Karina Grömer, Head of the Department of Prehistory, Natural History Museum Vienna, Austria

Elites, Luxury and Representation

Chair: Tiefengraber, Georg, Natural History Museum Vienna, Department of Prehistory

- 13:20–13:40 **Mückler, Hermann**, University of Vienna, Anthropological Society Vienna
Eliten aus ethnohistorischer Sicht im Kontext von Machtgefälle, Hierarchien und Funktionseliten
- 13:40–14:00 **Stegmaier, Gerd**, fodilus GmbH, Bureau for Archaeology and Excavation Techniques
Bodies of importance: On the role of body preparation and presentation in the context of Early Iron Age elite burials
- 14:00–14:10 **Discussion**
- 14:10–14:30 **Golec, Martin / Golec Mírová, Zuzana / Chytráček, Miloslav / Kučera, Lukáš / Martínek, Jan / Kagemann, Katja / Mischka, Doris / Zemek, Vojtěch**, Palacký University Olomouc / Friedrich-Alexander-University of Erlangen-Nürnberg
The gold of the north: The role of elites for the amber trade in Early Iron Age Europe
- 14:30–14:50 **Grömer, Karina**, Natural History Museum Vienna, Department of Prehistory
Representation of elites through costume
- 14:50–15:00 **Discussion**
- 15:00–15:30 **Coffee break**

Albanian Archaeology

Chair: Horejs, Barbara, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austrian Archaeological Institute

- 15:30–15:50 **Bunguri, Adem**, Institute of Archaeology, Academy of Sciences of Albania
Aristocratic elites in the 1st millennium BC through Illyrian helmets in Albania and Kosovo
- 15:50–16:10 **Shehi, Eduard**, Albanian Institute of Archaeology
Between Greeks and Illyrians: The Role of Historical Manipulation in Power Legitimization after the Civil War in Epidamnos
- 16:10–16:20 **Discussion**



- 16:20–16:40 **Ceka, Neritan**, Academy of Sciences of Albania
Babunja and Lower Selca (Pelion?) in the Protohistory Of Via Egnatia
- 16:40–16:50 **Selaj, Erilda**, Shtëpia Studio Kadare
The Treasure of Selca: A story of “conservations” and displays
- 16:50–17:10 **Lahi, Bashkim / Lahi, Sokol**, Albanian Institute of Archaeology / Cultural Tours Albania, Shkoder
Archäologische Ausgrabungen und Kulturtourismus in Albanien
- 17:10–17:20 **Discussion**
- 17:20–18:00 **Break**

Keynote Speech

- 18:00–19:00 **Fiedler, Manuel/ Pánczél, Szilamér -Péter / Daehner, Jens/ Döhner, Gregor / Gänsicke, Susanne / von Hesberg, Henner / Lahi, Bashkim / Martin, Thomas / Shehi, Eduard Humboldt**
University Berlin / Roman Limes Research Center, Mures County Museum / J. Paul Getty Museum / German Archaeological Institute / Albanian Institute of Archaeology
- Der Reiter aus Babunja – Selbstrepräsentation der Eliten in griechischen Apoiikien des Adriaaraumes*

Followed by a **buffet by the Embassy of the Republic of Albania in Austria** in the Upper Dome Hall of the NHM Vienna, Albanian music and greeting words by Katrin Vohland, Fate Velaj and Karina Grömer.
The "Horse and Rider of Babunja" will be presented in the Gold Cabinet of the Natural History Museum Vienna.

Wednesday 14th May 2025

Elites and equestrians

Chair: Grömer, Karina, Natural History Museum Vienna, Department of Prehistory

- 09:00–09:20 **Bühler, Birgit**, University of Vienna, Vienna Institute for Archaeological Science
Ancient horse-riding styles & mounted combat techniques – a transdisciplinary approach
- 09:20–09:40 **Nebelsick, Louis Daniel**, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, Warsaw
Weapon bearing indigenous elites and the divergent impact of Scythian raids in Central Europe during the 6th century BC
- 09:40–10:00 **Maraszek, Regine**, State Office for Heritage Management and Archaeology Saxony-Anhalt, State Museum of Prehistory
Lady on horseback. The horsewoman and charioteer 1300–800 BC in north central Europe
- 10:00–10:20 **Stoychev, Ruslan**, Institute of Art Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
The Ancient Horseman of Thrace: a case study of the Lukovit Treasure
- 10:20–10:30 **Discussion**
- 10:30–11:00 **Coffee break**



Elites in Ancient Thracia

Chair: *Trinkl, Elisabeth*, University of Graz, Department of Antiquity

- 11:00–11:20 **Nankov, Emil**, National Archaeological Institute with Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
Archaeology of Gender, Rank and Status: The Alabasters from the Thracian Royal Burial in the Golyama Kosmatka Tumulus
- 11:20–11:40 **Pramatarov, Kaloyan**, National Archaeological Institute with Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
Rich Tumuli Graves in Thrace. Origin, Essence, Main Characteristics (5th – 3rd centuries BC)
- 11:40–12:00 **Emilov, Julij**, Sofia University, Department of Ancient History, Thracian Studies and Medieval History
Stories of Three Ladies in Early Hellenistic Thrace (the Late 4th – Early 3rd centuries BC)
- 12:00–12:10 **Discussion**
- 12:10–12:30 **Poster Presentations (with short comments)**
- 12:30–14:00 **Lunch break**

Central and Southern Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean Area

Chair: *Wendling, Holger*, Bavarian Archaeological State Collection, Munich

- 14:00–14:20 **Guštin, Mitja**, Emeritus of University of Primorska, Koper
Princesses from Lyhaidos, place of the light
- 14:20–14:40 **Strobel, Karl**, University of Klagenfurt
Macedonia – Land of Women. A Historical and Archaeological Analysis of Internal Structures of the Macedonian Elite Society
- 14:40–15:00 **Trinkl, Elisabeth / Klöckl-Zorić, Regina** University of Graz, Department of Antiquity
Observations on the role and identity of elites based on the material culture from Peloponnesian sanctuaries
- 15:00–15:20 **Schmid, Stephan G.**, Humboldt-University Berlin, Institute of Archaeology
The female elite(s) of ancient Idalion (Cyprus) and their self-representation
- 15:20–15:30 **Discussion**
- 15:30–16:00 **Coffee break**

Chair: *Nebelsick, Louis*, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, Warsaw

- 16:00–16:20 **Wendling, Holger**, Bavarian Archaeological State Collection, Munich
Hallstatt Period Sumptuous Burials of the Central Balkans – Iron Age Societies shaped by Tradition, Communication and Innovation
- 16:20–16:40 **Peška, Jaroslav**, Archaeological Centre Olomouc
Reiche Gräber der Angehörigen der Oberschicht von Kneževica Glavica in Montenegro
- 16:40–17:00 **Heilmann, Daniela**, Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich / Romano-Germanic Commission Frankfurt/Main
Between Representation and Crafts: Investigating the Lives of Elite Women in the 1st Millennium BC Southern Balkans



- 17:00–17:10 **Discussion**
- 17:10–17:30 **Gavranovic, Mario**, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austrian Archaeological Institute
Early Iron Age female costumes from Bosnia in light of recent discoveries
- 17:30–17:50 **Papazovska, Aleksandra**, Archaeological Museum of the Republic of North Macedonia
The concept of a female role in the social structure of the Late Bronze and Iron age society in the Axios valley
- 17:50–18:10 **Perkić, Domagoj / Dizdar, Marko / Potrebica, Hrvoje**, Dubrovnik Museums, Archaeological Museum / Institute of Archaeology, Zagreb / University of Zagreb
Bright and shiny ladies from the Early Iron Age on the southern part of the eastern Adriatic coast
- 18:10–18:20 **Discussion**
- 18:30 **Guided tours through the Natural History Museum Vienna, Restoration labs, storage facilities**
- 20:00 **Dinner**

Thursday 15th May 2025

Slovenia and Croatia

Chair: Amann, Petra, University of Vienna, Department of Ancient History, Papyrology and Epigraphy

- 09:00–09:20 **Fileš Kramberger, Julia / Mavrović Mokos, Janja / Potrebica, Hrvoje**, University of Zagreb, Department of Archaeology
From Burial to Household: Real Lives of Elite Women in Early Iron Age Croatia
- 09:20–09:40 **Ložnjak Dizdar, Daria / Metzner-Nebelsick, Carola / Dujmic, Domagoj / Dizdar, Marko**, Institute of Archaeology, Zagreb / Ludwig-Maximilians-University, Munich / Archaeological Museum Osijek
Women in elites of the 1st millennium BC in the middle Danube region: the sites of Batina and Sotin
- 09:40–09:50 **Discussion**
- 09:50–10:10 **Grahek Lucija**, Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Institute of Archaeology
A Girl with a Gold Coin: Female Burials from the Iron Age in Bela Krajina, SE Slovenia
- 10:10–10:30 **Križ, Borut**, Dolenjski muzej Novo mesto
Princely barrow 66 on Kapiteljska njiva in Novo mesto (Slovenia)
- 10:30–10:40 **Discussion**
- 10:40–11:10 **Coffee break**

Italy

Chair: Potrebica, Hrvoje, University of Zagreb

- 11:10–11:30 **Negrini, Claudio**, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austrian Archaeological Institute
Zwischen Identität und Netzwerk: Helme und Kriegertracht eisenzeitlicher Eliten im nordadriatischen Raum



- 11:30–11:50 **Amann, Petra**, University of Vienna, Department of Ancient History, Papyrology and Epigraphy
Reich beschenkt! Gaben an Frauen im Rahmen der orientalisierenden Eliten Etruriens
- 11:50–12:00 **Discussion**
- 12:00–13:30 **Lunch break**

Central Europe

Chair: Metzner-Nebelsick, Carola, Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich

- 13:30–13:50 **Rudorfer, Johann / Obernberger, Jana / Seisenbacher, Alexander / Baumgartner, Nina**,
Natural History Museum Vienna, Department of Prehistory
Beispiele für elitäre Bestattungen aus dem Gräberfeld von Hallstatt
- 13:50–14:00 **Ramsl, Peter C. / Kohl, Leona / Urban, Patrik / Novotny, Friederike / Spannagl-Steiner, Michaela**,
University of Vienna, Department of Prehistoric and Historical Archaeology / FWF-Projekt CATA,
Natural History Museum Vienna, Department of Anthropology
The elite of women in the Middle European corridor with special reference to the Northeast Austrian Group (NAG) in the La Tène period
- 14:00–14:10 **Discussion**
- 14:10–14:40 **Coffee break**

Chair: Stegmaier, Gerd, fodilus GmbH

- 14:40–15:00 **Trefný, Martin / Mangel, Tomáš / Stolz, Daniel**, University of J. E. Purkyně, Ústí nad Labem
Social elites of the Early Iron Age in Bohemia. But based on what criteria?
- 15:00–15:20 **Salayová, Ivana**, Charles University Prague
La-Tène metal bracelets/armlets from Moravia and their relation to the female elites
- 15:20–15:30 **Discussion**
- 15:30–15:50 **Melichar, Petr / Golec, Martin / Golec Mírová, Zuzana / Kučera, Lukáš / Tiefengraber, Georg / Grömer, Karina**, Palacký University Olomouc / Natural History Museum Vienna, Department of Prehistory
Gems from the fire: tracing the Glass Jewels of Moravian Hallstatt elites
- 15:50–16:10 **Józefowska-Domańska, Anna**, Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology Polish Academy of Science
Transformations in Elite Identity of the Hallstatt B–D period. The Case of the Cemetery in Domastaw, Poland
- 16:10–16:30 **Concluding Discussion**



Poster

Gergova, Diana, National Academy of Art, Sofia

The Thracian woman. Ancient accounts and archaeological evidence

Hirsch, Barbara, Natural History Museum Vienna, *Department of Prehistory*

Einfach Mensch – prähistorische nicht-geschlechtsspezifische Darstellungen

Karwowski, Maciej, Independent researcher

La Tène Period Connections: Interactions between the Austrian Danube Region and the Balkans

Lau, Ronja, Ruhr-University Bochum

Farben als Ausdruck von Macht – Aktuelle Untersuchungen latènezeitlicher Textilfunde aus dem Salzbergwerk Dürrnberg

Novotny, Friederike / Spannagl-Steiner, Michaela / Kohl, Leona / Urban, Patrik / Ramsil, Peter C., Natural History Museum Vienna, Department of Anthropology / University of Vienna, Department of Prehistoric and Historical Archaeology, FWF-Project CATA

Children with special needs – part of an "elite" society

Pomberger, Beate Maria / Saunderson, Kayleigh, Natural History Museum Vienna, Department of Prehistory / University of Vienna, Department of Prehistoric and Historical Archaeology

Glocken und Schellen als Kennzeichen der Eliten

Turner, Manuela, Verein EXORATA

The Schandorf cemetery – final resting place of an "elite"?

Tiefengraber, Georg / Tiefengraber, Susanne, Natural History Museum Vienna, Department of Prehistory / Institute for Southeastern Alpine Bronze- and Iron Age Research ISBE

Iron Age elites in the Inner Alpine region – Strettweg and beyond

Tóth-Vásárhelyi, Maté / Kreiter, Attila / Fehér, Kristof / Aradi, László Előd, Eötvös Lóránt University, Faculty of Archeology / Hungarian National Museum Public Collection Center / Hungarian National Museum Archeometry Laboratory

A South Daunian crater from a warrior grave in Százhalombatta

Weidig, Joachim / Coen, Alessandro / Micozzi, Marina / Martinez-Labarga, Cristina / Pauselli, Rebecca / Pusceddu, Allegra / Ottoni, Claudio, Albert-Ludwigs-University Freiburg / University of Urbino Carlo Bo / Viterbo University of Tuscia, Department of Humanities, Communication and Tourism / Tor Vergata University of Rome, Department of Biology / University of Urbino Carlo Bo, Department of Humanistic Studies / Tor Vergata University of Rome, Department of Biology

Der Schmuck der reichen Schwestern. Prunkbestattungen von Frauen in Spoleto und ihr verwandtschaftliches Verhältnis

Venue

Natural History Museum Vienna, Room 19, Burgring 7, 1010 Vienna, Austria
Homepage: <https://www.nhm-wien.ac.at/>

Organizing committee:

Georg Tiefengraber: georg.tiefengraber@NHM.at
Adem Bunguri: bunguria1@gmail.com

Karina Grömer: karina.groemer@NHM.at
Artan Canaj: artan.canaj@mfa.gov.al

Contact

Barbara Hirsch, Natural History Museum Vienna, Burgring 7, 1010 Vienna, Austria, E-mail: barbara.hirsch@NHM.at