

STRANGE PREHISTORIC FINDS IN THE JÓSA
ANDRÁS MUSEUM

The finds:

1. Oval earthenware plate divided in two by a wall, which had many feet. Through its bottom there are smoothed-in channels forcing their way through the dividing wall and holding off at the end of the plate. Provenance: Rakamaz, age: neolithic, the lineornamented pottery. (Table I., II. 6., IV. 2., VIII. 1—3.)

2. Clay bowl in the shape of a drinking horn with two piercings below its rim. A find of neolithic age: its then owner may have held red paint in it and worn it perhaps on his belt. Provenance: Rakamaz (Table II. 2.).

3. A small pot with wing-shaped armes and etched-in decoration on them as well as its side. Its inside is not hollow, there isn't but a strait gap in it. Provenance: Rakamaz (Table II. 1.).

4. A little clay disk with scratches of a bird on the one and of an elephant on the other side. It was bored through, i. e. hangable. Provenance: Rakamaz. (Table III. 1—2.)

5. A little clay disk likewise from Rakamaz. Made of fine clay. Its decoration is composed of circular scraped-in lines and a series of pressed-in round dents parallel with the lines. In the middle there is a dent deeper and larger than the other ones. The other side of the disk is closely decorated with pectinated impressions. Its diameter: 5—7 cm, thickness: 1,2 cm. (Table III. 3—4.)

6. Stone axe decorated with bulging surfaces and groovings on them from the Early Bronze Age. Provenance: the churchyard from Tiszaeszlár. (Table III. 6—8.)

7. Miniature pots from Tiszapolgár-Csőszhalom: relics of the painted pottery of the late neolithic period. Size of them: diameters between 1—6 cm. (Table VI. 6—10. and VII. 1—5.)

8. Clay vessel, standing on low feet, and from the two sides are armlike, hollow, closed pipes coming out. Its age and purpose unknown. Provenance: Tiszapolgár. Maybe it's of neolithic origine. Its length: 15,5 cm. (Table II. 5., VII. 16—17.)

9. Fragments of ducklike vessels of the Early Bronze Age from the county Szabolcs (Table IV. 7.) and from Füzesabony (Table IV. 6.).

10. Net-sinkers of strange form. (Table IV. 3., IV. 1., VII. 8.).

11. Fragment of a flat idol picturing a female bust. The head and arms of it are broken off. Its age: that of the line-ornamented pottery. From the county Szabolcs. (Table V. 7.)

12. Spindle-shaped idol picturing a woman. Its length: 7,2 cm. Likewise from the county Szabolcs. (Table III. 5.)

13. A small clay button bored-through in four places. Diameter: 2,8 cm. Provenance: Rakamaz. (V. t. 2.)

14. Clay horns of cattle. Their length: 4—7 cm. They can't be parts of clay rings because they don't curve much so and their ends are smoothed. Provenance: Tiszadob-Ókenéz. Age: that of the lineornamented pottery. (Table III. 9—12.)

15. A clay thing with the form of a plate. It may have been either a breast-plate or a pot-lid. (Table V. 5.)

16. A miniature clay axe imitating a stone axe. Length: 6 cm. From an unknown provenance in the county Szabolcs. (Table V. 3.) From the late neolithic age.

17. A „pelta”-like clay plate that may have been a net-sinker too, yet more a breast-plate. Provenance: Tiszanagyfalu. It is perhaps neolithic. (Table V. 8.)

18. A handled bronze amulet of double axe form. Length: 4,5 cm. Of the late Bronze Age. A find of county Szabolcs. (Table V. 1.)

19. One flat foot of the bench of a neolithic sitting statuette or a man-like vessel. Length: 7,3 cm. Found in the county Szabolcs. (Table V. 6.)

20. Feet of neolithic man-like sculptures — from Kenézlő (Table VI. 4.), Paszab (Table V. 4.), and Tiszapolgár-Csőszhalom (Table VI. 1—3., 5.).

21. Fragment of a conical pot-lid decorated with animal form, i. e. figure of dog: the decoration, the animal body in standing posture, was the handle of the toil. Provenance: Tiszadob-Borzik. Age: the period of the Late Neolithic or of the Bodrogkeresztúr-culture. (Table II. 3.)

22. Night-light shaped to animal body. It represents a sheep or a pig. Provenance: Tiszapolgár-Csőszhalom. Age: late neolithic. (Table II. 4.)

A detailed proof of the pot-lid 21

This type was already summarized by the author before.⁶ By this time there are also newer finds published. From D evaványa one gets to know a similar potlid of the finds of the line-ornamented pottery too.⁷ All such finds belong to the Tisza-culture and the class of archeological finds equal in age with this⁸⁻¹¹ or to the horizon of the culture of Lengyel, of Bogrogrzeszt ur and of the painted Moravian pottery.¹²⁻¹⁴

The southern relations of the type are well-known,^{6,15} though the quoted analogy of Tepe Giyan is not a sculpture but a painted decoration. But a (lid)-handle from Ur, of the age of the third Dynasty of Ur already belongs to the plastic art, picturing a boar.¹⁶ On an alabaster pot-lid from Byblos there is again a bull lying. Its age: 2000 or 1800—1750 b. C.¹⁷ It is quite possible that it has relations to Crete though its age is far off that of the pot-lid of Mochlos.⁴¹

Especially important are the flat lids of K ltepe and Tepe Hissar.^{18,19} The former can be dated in the second half of the third millenium b. C. and the latter in the Hissar III-B. On the lid of K ltepe we see the embossed figure of a lion victoriously lying beside a downed man. On the find of Tepe Hissar there is similarly a lion lying, which, however, brought down a bull visible as fallen prostrate beside him. The two finds were created by conceptions identical almost totally and can be dated in almost identical ages. This gives them cultural importance. They are important also for showing clearly the role of the beast on the lid, namely the symbolical guarding. They are expressing the flash when the lion won a final victory over the enemy (the man or the bull) seeking after the contents of the vessel.

Accordingly we can't see but a dog, lion, panther—as a rule a beast of prey on every such a lid.

Similar facts and figures, however, can't be got not only of the works of plastic art. While building the temples of the Near East there were stone lions often placed in or before the porch. They were cut out for guarding the edifice symbolically. On the well-known temple-model of Beisan too, one has again to see such a watching beast.

There were also several similar statues discovered in the course of excavations. So was the portal of the temple of God A  ur guarded by the statue of a pair of lions.²⁴ In Mari, at the end of third mill., there were too bronze lions who performed these duties.²⁵ Also written sources of Mari mention such statues of lions before the temple of Dagan.²⁶ In the age of the Dynasty of Larsa it was the temple of King Sumu-ilu (1824—1796) there were, two copper lions placed before.²⁷ This may have been a heritage of an ancient sumerian idea. In Lagash namely erected Entemena a wood-carving of lion before the temple of Ningirsu.²⁸ In Uruk, of the foundation of the White Temple, there were skeletons of a panther and a lion unearthed.³¹ Also the entrances of the palace in Nimrud as well as from Khorsabad were guarded by stone lions.^{29, 30} All these statues, respectively beasts had to guard and to safe-guard the holy places from the evilspirits and other unpious visitors.

Such a symbolical significance was attributed to the dog too. In the library room of Kish (built about 1800—1700) there were three figurines of dogs digged beneath the floor.³² On one of them there was an inscription too „biter of his enemy”. Nabukudururur I. (1135—? b. C.) stowed beneath the door-step of a temple gold, silver, and bronze figurines of dogs.³³ In a palace of Ur, built by King Nabonidus there were two small dog-figurines placed into the bottom of the wall.³⁴ At the entrance of the palace of Assurbanapli (668—626) in Niniveh there were five walled-in dog figurines watching.³⁵ Also in Nippur there were figurines of dogs stowed beneath the floor.³⁶ All these dog-figurines had the same task: a symbolical guarding.

Hittite texts let us know when these guarding figurines must have been stowed away to their destination. This had to happen in some distinct period of the building by determined ceremony.³⁷ From earlier sumerian texts is also visible that „a white and a black dog” are watching a temple.³⁸ Another text gives information on the temple in Isin having been watched by dogs.³⁹ This is meant symbolically and yet can be of real meaning too.

Thus already in the sumerian period there were three modes of this kind of guarding developed: him wanted be achieved by setting either real living animals or vast animal statues before the entrance (porch), respectively, by stowing smaller figurines or bodies of animals in the foundation. So is it more than evident that, in the third millennium, there was a wide-spread, general belief that statues or

carcasses of lions or dogs be able to watch before entrances of buildings and portals of temples, be able to scare away evil spirits and unbidden intruders. Such an idea existed as we know in the early bronze age of Hungary — it is shown by the finds from Jászdózsza.⁴⁰

Consequently the figures on the pot-lids must have guarded the contents of the vessels. In the case of the pyxis and lid from Mochlos this content may have been even some gold treasure.⁴¹⁻⁴² In the shaft-tomb 5. of Mykénai there was the small wooden box found on which there are two dog-figures lying. As to this—treasures may have been held in it again. By this find is shown that it was the age of Mykénai that passed on the age of Homer the belief in using dogs as symbolical watches. The same is proved also by the lion-gate of Mykénai, which is the most artistic expression of the belief in symbolical guarding by lions, really the most artistic one among all finds till now.

Homer writes that before the palace of the king of the Phaeacs there were gold and silver dogs watching.⁴⁴ According to other lines of him, also living dogs were watching before the palaces of the kings.⁴⁵⁻⁴⁶ C. H. Gordon states that a parallel with this in the semitic area one can't find but in the Keret-legend of Ugarit,⁴⁷ and could and ought to be traced back to same Indo-european ascendancy. According, however, to the sumerian facts and figures³⁸⁻³⁹ it is unnecessary to reckon with any Indo-european influence. Be the kingly palaces of Homer or Ugarit watched by packs of hounds so we have to see in this by no means any influence this and similar ones was made possible by the archaical structure of the Homeric society. A patriarchal slave society does not exclude at all that a kingly palace could be watched by the same kind of pack of hounds — as the hut of a shepherd. In Mesopotamia, however we can't find but in the third mill. any pack of hound watching buildings. They were replaced by statues later.

In this custome of symbolical guarding (by statues and figurines of animals) — conversely — one really has to see some ascendancy from the Near East to the relics in Greece as well as in the prehistoric finds from Southeastern Europe. The question is only, wether the influences of the Near East directly or indirectly affected the mykénaean-homeric poetry, respctively, the religious fundament of it. Otherwise, it's quite impossible that the custome would have started from Greece in order to come to Ugarit — as it is supposed by F. Dirlmeier.⁴⁹

We have every right to accept that the idea to use as watches statues of animals set on the lids of vessels, remained as a heritage from the late neolithic age of Southeastern Europe and it came as such a one to the religion and art Mykénai. They are the late neolithic clay lids described and quoted above, which could be taken for starting-point.⁵⁻¹⁴ We look for their origine in the Near East. These European finds might have impressed the finds of similar type from the Mykénaean age. At least, there are no chronological obstacles against this supposition. Namely our finds, as to their dates, can't be far off the Indo-European migrations of about 1900 that is the roots of the Mykénaean civilisation.

According to the pyxis-lid of Mochlos, the idea was already known by the Cretan world too, long before the age of Mykénai. Thus the art of Mykénai could have inherited in from the Southeast-European late neolithic as well as from the Cretan sources of art. For all that, as to Southeast-Europe as to Crete came this conception and its picturing from the Near East. Probably the appearance of it in two areas can be reduced to one root which however branched off in some and the same time. For transmitter of the influences to Southeast-Europe we take the age of the Larisa and the Tisza-culture. For it had extremely close connections with the Near East, especially in the plastic art.⁵⁵⁻⁵⁶

Accordingly the Mykénaean age might have „on the spot” inherited this custome, this way of picturing. By its tight contact with Phoenicia and Asia Minor, however, it could have got from the East newer impulses too. This is proved in the first line by the lion-gate of Mykénai. The relation of this with the lion-statues before the entrances and porches in Mesopotamia seems as quite clear. These newer impulses from the East revived an ancient custome, belief, and picturing sunk already into oblivion. To the Homeric greek Religion, however, came the belief in symbolical guarding by influences of Asia Minor or Phoenicia, more new than even those we mentioned, but as a heritage from the age of Mykénai.

There are indirect facts proving that the statues of animals on the lids guarded the contents of the vessels symbolically. So in the first line big vessels from Kish

and other places, the handle of which show the form of woman. According to a well-founded supposition stood the liquids in every of these vessels under the protection of the goddess pictured on the handle.⁵⁷ The symbolical guarding of treasures and buildings by a dragon is similiary well-known.⁵⁸

If comparing the jars of Hungary belonging to the lids of animal figure⁵⁹ (from the copper-age Bodrogkeresztúr-culture) with those of Mesopotamia there is a striking likeness perceptible.⁶¹ These jugs of Mesopotamia together with the high-footed plates belonging to them were used for sacrificies. Also of the high-footed plates there are analogies from Hungary known.⁶² The ritual use of the high-footed plates appears from other facts too. Consequently those jugs of the Copper Age from Hungary, which have pot lids with decoration of some animal figurine, must have had ritual purposes by all accounts. The animal figurine on the lid now, it was guarding the consecrated liquid (water, wine, oil, beer) in the vessel.

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Unique analogy of our object 1., the divided-in-two plate with channels, is a similar find from Miskolc-Fűtőház.⁶³ Both plates belong to the culture of line-ornamented pottery. As to the purpose of the plate from Rakamaz — it is very difficult to succeed in determining it. So much can be accepted without any doubt that it served for straining some kind of liquid. Was it used for curd-making so it let the whey leak-out. Was it, however, some kind of vessel of wine-press, so it caused the must to flow. According to the latest conception we are allowed to think that the man of line-ornamented pottery might have known wine and made wine.⁷⁰

For all that, we can still suppose that the plate of Rakamaz was a kind of altar for bloody sacrifice. The sacrificies through it might have been of type similar to that, which could be reconstructed for the offering altar and „bothros” of Beycesultan.⁶⁹ From other finds and occurrences it may be assumed that the man of the neolithic age knew and used as the bloody as the bloodless sacrificies (for instance of the latter: the burning of the first fruits).

Anyhow, as to the use of the plate of Rakamaz, one can't yet take a final point of view.

The find 2. is neolithic, used for holding of red paint.

The things 4. and 5. are negatives for vessel-decorating of Roman origine.⁷¹ They belong to the Sarmatian material of the county.

Analogies of the miniature clay axe 16. in Hungary we know from late neolithic (of the culture of Lengyel)⁷²⁻⁷³, copper age, ⁷⁴⁻⁷⁵ and bronze-age ⁷⁵⁻⁷⁷ finds. The origine of these clay copies of axe, however, goes back to the neolithic period of Jericho,⁷⁹ respectively, the al-Ubaid age of Mesopotamia. Earlier there were not made but copies of vague shape.⁸⁰ They are frequent, before all, among the finds of al-Ubaid age from Southern Mesopotamia.⁸¹⁻⁸⁵ We are discovering imitations of copper axes too.⁸⁷

Such finds of Europe and Mesopotamia, through the origine of painted pottery from the Near East, may have got a genetic relation with each other. The type of their copying was of volve nature. The axes might have been to mythology — used the respective one as his favourite weapon, his revealing attribute, by its special form. E. g., Enlil's axe was the „pick-ax”.⁸⁶

The clay horns under 14. belong to the group of the so-called „horns of consecration”, containing bullheads and bull-horns. They similarly have got their origine in the Near East.⁹⁰ Our find, however, departs from the general type.

The find 15. may have been a breast-plate, some analogy of the gold breast-plate of Russe.⁹³ Otherhand, perhaps, nearer — analogies of it are already known among the neolithic finds of the Balkans,⁹³ further in the material of about 3000 from Tepe Hissar.

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