



Preliminary 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 Babunjë"

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 Embassy of Albania in Vienna

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 BCE 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 Babunjë", 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 NHMW 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.



Preliminary Conference Programme

Tuesday 13th May 2025

From 12:00 Registration Conference Office, Lecture Hall, Naturhistorisches Museum

Greeting Words and Introduction

13:00–13:20 **Katrin Vohland**, General Director and Scientific CEO of the Natural History Museum Vienna, Austria
Fate Velaj, Embassy of Albania in Vienna
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: N.N.

- 13:20–13:40 **Mückler, Hermann**, University of Vienna, Anthropologische Gesellschaft
Eliten aus ethnohistorischer Sicht im Kontext von Machtgefälle, Hierarchien und Funktionseliten
- 13:40–14:00 **Stegmaier, Gerd**, fodilus GmbH
Bodies of significance: 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
The gold of the north: The role of elites for the amber trade in Early Iron Age Europe
- 14:30–14:50 **Grömer, Karina**, Department of Prehistory, Natural History Museum Vienna
Representation of elites through costume
- 14:50–15:00 **Discussion**
- 15:00–15:30 **Coffee break**

Albanian Archaeology

Chair: xx

- 15:30–15:50 **Adem Bunguri**, Institute of Archaeology, Academy of Sciences of Albania
Akkulturationsprozesse in Süddillyrien des 1. Jahrtausends v. Chr.
- 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 **Selaj, Erida**, Shtëpia Studio Kadare
The Treasure of Selca: A story of “conservations” and displays.
- 16.40–16.50: **Lahi, Bashkim**, Albanian Institute of Archaeology
Archäologische Ausgrabungen und Kulturtourismus in Albanien
- 16.50–17.10: **Discussion**
- 17:10–18:00 **Break**

Keynote Speech

- 18:00–19:00 **von Hesberg, Henner / Daehner, Jens / Döhner, Gregor / Fiedler, Manuel / Gaensicke, Susanne / Lahi, Bashkim / Martin, Thomas / Panczel, Szilamer / Shehi, Eduard**, University of Köln/DAI/ J. Paul Getty Museum / Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin / Albanian Institute of Archaeology /
Der Reiter aus Babunja - Selbstrepräsentation der Eliten in griechischen Apokoien des Adriaaraumes

Followed by a buffet by the Embassy of Albania in Vienna in the Upper Dome Hall of the NHM

Wednesday 14th May 2025

Elites and equestrians

Chair: N.N.

- 09:00–09:20 **Bühler, Birgit**, University of Vienna, VIAS/HEAS
Ancient horse-riding styles & mounted combat techniques – a transdisciplinary approach
- 09:20–09:40 **Nebelsick, Louis Daniel**, Uniwersytet Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego w Warszawie
Weapon bearing indigenous elites and the divergent impact of Scythian raids in Central Europe during the 6th century BCE
- 09:40–10:00 **Maraszek, Regine**, Landesamt für Denkmalpflege und Archäologie Sachsen-Anhalt, Landesmuseum für Vorgeschichte
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

- 11:00–11:20 **Nankov, Emil**, NAIM, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
Archaeology of Gender, Rank and Status: The Alabastra 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 BCE)
- 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: N.N.

- 14:00–14:20 **Guštin, Mitja**, Emeritus of University of Primorska, Koper
Princesses from Lyhnidos, 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**, University of Graz, Institut für Antike
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 of Berlin, Institut 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: N.N.
- 16:00–16:20 **Wendling, Holger**, Archäologische Staatssammlung München
Hallstatt Period Sumptuous Burials of the Central Balkans – Iron Age Societies shaped by Tradition, Communication and Innovation
- 16:20–16:40 **Peška, Jaroslav**, Archeologické centrum Olomouc
Reiche Gräber der Angehörigen der Oberschicht von Kneževića Glavica in Montenegro
- 16:40–17:00 **Heilmann, Daniela**, LMU Munich / RGK Frankfurt a.M.
Between Representation and Crafts: Investigating the Lives of Elite Women in the 1st Millennium BCE Southern Balkans
- 17:00–17:10 **Discussion**
- 17:10–17:30 **Gavranovic Mario**, Austrian Academy of Sciences
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: N.N.

- 09:00–09:20 **Fileš Kramberger, Julia**, University of Zagreb
From Burial to Household: Real Lives of Elite Women in Early Iron Age Croatia
- 09:20–09:40 **Loznjak Dizdar, Daria / Metzner Nebelsick, Carola / Dujmic Domagoj / Dizdar Marko**, Institute of Archaeology, Zagreb / LMU Munich / Archaeological Museum Osijek / Institute of Archaeology, Zagreb
Women in elites of the 1st millennium BC in the middle Danube region: the sites of Batina and Sotin
- 9:40-9.50 **Discussion**
- 09:50–10:10 **Grahek Lucija**, Institute of Archaeology ZRC SAZU
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

- 11:10–11:30 **Negrini, Claudio**, ÖAW-ÖAI
Zwischen Identität und Netzwerk: Helme und Kriegertracht eisenzeitlicher Eliten im nordadriatischen Raum
- 11:30–11:50 **Weidig, Joachim**, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg
Die „Amazonen“ aus Belmonte Piceno. Eisenzeitliche Frauenbestattungen mit Waffen aus Ostitalien



- 11:50–12:10 **Amann, Petra**, University of Vienna
„Reich beschenkt! Gaben an Frauen im Rahmen der orientalisierenden Eliten Etruriens“
- 12:10–12:20 **Discussion**
- 12:20–13:30 **Lunch break**

Central and Western Europe

Chair: N.N.

- 13:30–13:50 **Rudorfer, Johann, Jana Obernberger, Alexander Seisenbacher, Nina Baumgartner**, NHM Wien, Departement of Prehistory
Beispiele für elitäre Bestattungen aus dem Gräberfeld von Hallstatt
- 13:50–14:10 **Koch Waldner, Thomas**, Keltenmuseum Hallein
Rollenbilder in der Eisenzeit am Beispiel elitärer Bestattungen am Dürrnberg bei Hallein
- 14:10–14:30 **Ramsl, Peter C.**, University of Vienna
The elite of women in the Middle European corridor with special reference to the Northeast Austrian Group (NAG) in the La Tène period.
- 14:30–14:40 **Discussion**
- 14:40–15:10 **Coffee break**
- 15:10–15:30 **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?
- 15:30–15:50 **Salayová, Ivana**, Charles University in Prague
La-Tène metal bracelets/armlets from Moravia and their relation to the female elites
- 15:50–16:10 **Melichar, Petr / Golec, Martin / Golec Mírová, Zuzana / Kučera, Lukáš / Tiefengraber, Georg / Grömer, Karina**, Palacký University Olomouc / NHM Vienna
Gems from the fire: tracing the Glass Jewels of Moravian Hallstatt elites
- 16:10–16:20 **Discussion**
- 16:20–16:40 **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 Domasław, Poland
- 16:40–17:00 **Arnold, Bettina**, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Seer, Prophet, Witch? The Ambiguity of “Prophylactic” Objects in Elite Female Burials in Iron Age West Central Europe
- 17:00–17:30 **Concluding Discussion**



Poster

Gergova, Diana, National Academy of Art

The Thracian woman. Ancient accounts and archaeological evidence

Hirsch, Barbara, NHM Vienna

Einfach Mensch - prähistorische nicht-geschlechtsspezifische Darstellungen

Karwowski, Maciej, Independent researcher

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

Novotny, Friederike, NHM Vienna

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

Pomberger, Beate, NHM Vienna

Glocken und schellen als Kennzeichen der Eliten (?)

Teßmann, Barbara, Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte Berlin, SMPK

Japodische Frauen (AT)

Weidig, Joachim, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg

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

Venue

Natural History Museum Vienna, Hall 16, Burgring 7, 1010 Vienna, Austria

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Framework program to the conference

On May 13, 2025, a **festive reception** organized by the Albanian Embassy will take place in the evening with an Albanian cultural programme, during which the "Horse and Rider of Babunjë" will also be presented in the Gold Cabinet of the Natural History Museum Vienna.

Special **guided tours** of the collections of the Natural History Museum Vienna are also offered as a supporting programme.