

Session Proposal

European Association of Archaeologists (EAA) 12th Annual Meeting

Krakow, Poland

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Theme:

Archaeology and Material Culture: Interpreting the Archaeological Record

Session Title:

Defence Structures from Central Europe to the Aegean in the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC

Abstract:

In the course of the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC, we witness the process of spreading of the idea of defence structures from the south. This was a phenomenon that was formally highly diversified and appeared in different cultural contexts. Among them are structures related to the youngest sections of the early Helladic period in the Aegean, the Vučedol culture on the Sava and Drawa rivers, and numerous Early Bronze groups from the Carpathian Basin. Slightly later, the idea reached the northern limits of the Basin where defence settlements are known from the Hatvan and Mad'arovce cultures. Next, the idea was adopted further north and west and reached the Central European Plain as part of the Únětice culture. In addition, defence settlements are to be found in areas around the Alps.

We suggest to approach the question of defence settlements from different angles. Of crucial importance is the formal analysis of the phenomenon: its typology, size, and forms of constructing fortifications. Another question is its chronology and cultural context. Still another group of questions is formed by the socio-political functions of the settlements in various cultural contexts. In this respect, one would have to distinguish between their role as local centres and nodes in the network of long-distance exchange structures.

We are aware that one seminar will not be enough to discuss all these questions. We expect, however, that the meeting will be the first in a series and will establish direct contacts among specialists. With time, thanks to this forum a stable group of specialists should evolve.

The proceedings will be published in a separate monograph. Editorial guidelines will be sent to persons interested.

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