

Makt och samhälle

Politisk ekonomi under bronsåldern i Karpaterbäckenet

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Akademisk avhandling för avläggande av filosofie doktorsexamen i arkeologi vid Göteborgs universitet, som med tillstånd av humanistiska fakultetsnämnden, kommer att offentligens försvaras fredagen den tredje december, klockan 13.00 i sal T 302, gamla hovrätten, Olof Wijksgatan 6, Göteborg.

Abstract

This thesis examines social power in tell-building societies during the Early and Middle Bronze Age (circa 2200 to 1400 BC) in the Carpathian Basin.

The interpretative framework is based on the notion that social power in stratified pre-state societies was based on control over economic, ideological and military sources of power, and the ability to combine these in power networks. In order to describe these conditions are material from different parts of the Carpathian Basin analysed, with a focus on the fortified tell-settlement Százhalombatta-Földvár and the surrounding Benta valley.

In this thesis it is argued that the tell-building societies were involved in a well-developed intra-regional exchange system, that they had effective subsistence production, and that several communities specialised in the production of different goods. This situation enabled the use of two interrelated economic power strategies fashioned from control over staples and valuables respectively, which could be used to finance political activities and governing organisations through a political economy.

The tell-building communities shared the same general ideology that emphasised a close connection between the elites and the middle class. It is also argued that the tell-settlements had an important ideological role. These settlements served as monuments, material representations of social unity and tradition, where a large tell signified a successful society with a long history. This situation made it possible for leaders, who were able to assert control over a tell with military and economic means, to use the community's cultural traditions and history in ideological power strategies.

The use of military might was an integral part of social power strategies. The material culture shows that members of the elite had military roles and that warfare was common during the Middle Bronze Age. Coupled with the economic and ideological conditions it is maintained that leaders were able to combine military and economic power strategies. Specifically, economic control made it possible to finance military specialists, who could be used in strategies to assert control over the economy.

Altogether, the sources of power were interrelated and could be used to support each other. Economic power enabled leaders to control ideological and military instruments. Military might was used to secure economic and ideological resources, while the ideology legitimised and institutionalised the stratified social system.