A Possible Late Eneolithic Tool Found at Tărtăria, Romania

Abstract:

The metallic awl described in this article was discovered in complex C 28 of the Pietroşiţa archaeological site (also known as Site 10) in the autumn of 2014, during preventive archaeological excavations carried out near the village of Tărtăria (Blandiana commune, Romania) in southern/southwestern Transylvania, as part of the Braşov-Simeria railway rehabilitation works. The awl was found on the bottom of C 28, a pit dug by prehistoric settlers from this part of the Mureş valley. In relative chronology, the complex C 28 belongs to the late Eneolithic, specifically to the earlier phases (I-II) of the Coţofeni culture. Metallographic XRF analysis revealed that the awl is made from copper, but microscopic visual examination of its features suggest that if it does indeed date from the early Coţofeni period, there are few analogous finds from this area. Due to the lack of similar objects from singular contexts of Coţofeni phases I and II, and the fact that those from phase III are only somewhat typologically similar, it seems that the awl represents a unique artefact from that archaeological culture. It definitely has strong connections with similar artefacts from the Developed Eneolithic up to the beginning of the Late Eneolithic, but this merely indicates a previous tradition of manufacturing these objects: it seems that this tradition was almost lost for a certain period in Coţofeni communities.

Keywords: *Tărtăria-Pietroşiţa, archaeological excavations, Copper Age, Coţofeni culture, awl.*