

The Prestigious Journal of Archaeological Science Published an Article on the Research of Long Neolithic Mounds in the Vicinity of Říp Mountain

The co-authors of the article “Neolithic long barrows were built on the margins of settlement zones as revealed by elemental soil analysis at four sites in the Czech Republic” are Dr Martin Janovský and Dr Laszlo Ferenczi from the Department of Archaeology at CU FA. The paper addresses whether it is possible to distinguish between prehistoric residential and ritual activities based on the elemental composition of soils.



The article focuses on the research of neolithic long barrows

in the vicinity of Říp Mountain (a ritual landscape in the centre of Bohemia). Its main aim is to verify, by means of extensive geochemical sampling and remote sensing, that these barrows are situated in a landscape not influenced by human activities.

The research employs the principles of large-scale sampling and thus builds on other geoarchaeological investigations currently conducted in the Czech Republic. The researchers used a large set of 1,085 soil samples collected from four mounds in the Czech Republic. Geochemical analysis, confirmed by magnetometry, recorded the absence of settlement features near the mounds on the one hand and the presence of later burial/ritual features on the other.

The research ascertained that the investigated mounds were built from local materials and that at the time of their construction, use, or abandonment, no human activity could be associated with the accumulation of ash and refuse in their vicinity. This result suggests that the mounds were built away from the Neolithic habitation zones.

The article is an output of the three-year project “Eneolitické dlouhé mohyly v Čechách a rekonstrukce rituální krajiny v okolí vrchu Říp” funded by Czech Science Foundation, researched by Charles University, University of West Bohemia in Pilsen, and Jan Evangelista Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem. Besides the co-authors from CU FA, the others are Dr Petr Křišťuf from the Departments of Archaeology at the University of West Bohemia, Dr Jan Turek from the Centre of Theoretical Study, Dr Jan Horák from the Department of Archaeology at University of Hradec Králové, and prof. Michal Hejcman from the Faculty of Environment at Jan Evangelista Purkyně University.

A documentary film *Domy mrtvých* about the “Houses of the Dead” has been produced in cooperation with the Czech Television and is freely available in Czech here.





Photo: Petr Krištuf, Michal Hejcman, Martin Gojda