

"...the nearest run thing...": The Genesis and Collapse of Bronze Age Centers in the Maros Valley of Southeastern Europe

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Around 2000 BC the settlements of the Maros Culture reached their widest extent across southeastern Hungary, western Romania, and northern Serbia. It was at this time that the Bronze Age settlement of Pecica Șanțul Mare was established. Over the next 500 years, Pecica rapidly rises to become the pre-eminent Bronze Age center in the region; controlling the distribution of metals and domestic horses throughout the Carpathian Basin, and then with equal rapidity collapses, and is entirely abandoned.

Renewed research at Pecica Șanțul Mare affords a fine-grained view of the interplay of factors, which led to the genesis and then collapse of this important Bronze Age polity, and provides important clues as to why state formation failed among the Bronze Age societies of Central and East Europe.