



Südtiroler Archäologiemuseum  
Museo Archeologico dell'Alto Adige  
South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology



Landesmuseen Südtirol  
Musei provinciali Alto Adige  
Museums provinciai

## Media Information

Bozen/Bolzano, April 2019

# “LOST & FOUND. Archaeology in South Tyrol before 1919”

Special Exhibition in the South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology from 2 April until 17 November 2019

**The origin of archaeological research in South Tyrol reaches back to the time before 1919. In that period today's South Tyrol was still part of the Habsburg Austro-Hungarian Empire. For the new special exhibition the South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology has gathered numerous exciting objects which were discovered in the Southern Alps during the centuries and decades prior to World War I. Today these objects are scattered across the world in different museums and collections. The majority of these objects and finds have never been displayed in South Tyrol before.**

**A comprehensive illustrated catalogue will be published for the special exhibition.**

### *Origin*

Memories of the “Treaty of Saint-Germain” (10 September 1919) and the resulting transfer of South Tyrol to Italy inspired the South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology to sift through archives around the world and find objects from this little known time period before World War I, which was very significant in terms of cultural history. The research findings were surprising, extensive and diverse. Ultimately nearly 1,000 objects of clear South Tyrolean origin were selected from museum repositories in South Tyrol, Trento and Austria as well as from museums in Bavaria, Berlin, Heidelberg, Hamburg, Moscow, England and even a museum in North America. These archaeological finds were all discovered before 1919 in the southern part of old Tyrol and subsequently found their way into other countries. As a result, most of them are unknown to the locals; some are even new to archaeological research.

## *Objects and Display*

The reasons and ways in which archaeological finds end up in different collections are relatively exciting though not often clear. What remains is their historical significance: the objects chosen for the special exhibition illustrate the impressive spectrum of craftsmanship and artistic skills of the people who populated the southern side of the Alps or left their influence from the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC (Neolithic, Copper and Bronze Age, Iron Age, and Roman times) up to the middle ages and 18<sup>th</sup> century AD.

The majority of objects have been restored. A few have been preserved in their original state for over a hundred years. These rediscovered finds are the centerpiece of the special exhibition. Based on historical special exhibitions from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they will be shown in order of the place they are currently held.

### *A few outstanding examples:*

In the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg there are several purchases from "Tyrol" and "South Tyrol". Numerous artifacts were purchased in Bolzano from Alois Überbacher, an antiques dealer. They include a Roman wheel brooch (2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> century AD) and a Roman key (1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century AD) purchased in 1890 as well as an Ostrogothic belt buckle (late 5<sup>th</sup>/early 6<sup>th</sup> century) and a Merovingian longsword (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> century AD), called a spatha, purchased in 1894. One of the most beautiful exhibits of all is the **golden disc brooch decorated with filigree and gemstones dated to the late 10<sup>th</sup>/early 11<sup>th</sup> century** from "Tyrol". All of these finds were unknown up to now.

Another truly spectacular rediscovery is the **late Bronze Age/early Iron Age axe (11<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> century BC) which was originally found in Prettau/Predoi** and is now housed in the British Museum. This axe was regarded as lost up to now. In addition, the curators rediscovered another **Iron Age axe (7<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century BC)** at the British Museum which was originally **from Branzoll/Bronzolo** and previously completely unknown.

Special **Bronze earrings from the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC** were rediscovered in Berlin (Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte) and are originally **from Säben/Sabbiona**. They highlight the fortified hill Säben's prehistory. The Iron Age was not yet extensively documented there.

The size of **the Frankfurth collection in the Milwaukee Public Museum** was also unknown until now. These finds can now be seen for the first time in Europe.

Finds from **Roman graves in Salurn/Salorno**, which are housed in Castello del Buonconsiglio in Trento, are also being shown for the first time.

A special area is reserved for the **finds from three excavation sites** which were divided up before 1919 and sold abroad. A large part of their components have been reconstructed and brought together for the first time: the **Iron Age burnt offering site Hochbichl in Dorf Tirol/Tirol** (Milwaukee (USA), Innsbruck), **Iron Age metal assemblages in Obervintl/Vandoies di Sopra** (Innsbruck, Trento, Rovereto, Bozen/Bolzano) and **Greifenstein/Castel Grifo** (Berlin, Moscow).

The special exhibition has been designed to reflect the painstaking task of preservation and the transport of works of art. Its packing crates and packaging materials are displayed to show how these objects have been shipped time and time again and still are to this day, though in a much gentler way.

The below mentioned historical figures continue their active role in documenting ancient finds posthumously in the current special exhibition. Animated pictures display quotes from their travelogues and explain their study of archaeological finds in the territory of modern South Tyrol.

Viewers will get a personal and entertaining glimpse of the adventures and misadventures of these historical figures and their research.

### *Archaeology in South Tyrol before 1919 and its Pioneers*

Individual leading personalities played a role in the perception and systematic investigation of archaeological monuments from South Tyrol. Through their interest in archaeology they helped to gather appreciation and research interest for ancient objects far ahead of their contemporaries. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century their sense of responsibility for their homeland and desire for education culminated in the founding of their own museums.

Archaeology in South Tyrol originated in the 16<sup>th</sup> century with a man by the name of Johann Turmair, known as Aventinus (1477-1534), who described Roman commemorative stones during his educational trip through Italy. Interest in Roman cultural assets continued into the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries owing to the work of Anton Roschmann (1694-1760), who documented further archaeological finds in South Tyrol. As a progressive thinker he pointed to the necessity of saving, preserving and allowing access to cultural assets. To this day his detailed drawings of objects help identify archaeological finds unearthed in South Tyrol.

In the wake of the Napoleonic Wars the study of nature and history became a “patriotic” task that was to be made accessible to all scientists and parties interested in museums for educational purposes. Reflecting on one’s own culture and traditions led to the founding of museum associations and later to the construction of the first museums in the crown land of Tyrol. The middle classes and service gentry were responsible for these new museums. In 1823 under the patronage of heir to the throne, Erzherzog Ferdinand, the “Tiroler Nationalmuseum Ferdinandeum” was created in Innsbruck.

As a reaction to collection activity in Innsbruck, which was perceived as centralistic, several museums and libraries were established on the southern side of the Alps: 1851 in Rovereto, 1856 in Trento, and finally 1882/1905 in Bozen/Bolzano, 1900 in Meran/Merano and 1901 in Brixen/Bressanone each with its own archaeological collection. In addition, the Benedictine monastery Muri Gries as well as the k.u.k. Obergymnasium in Bozen/Bolzano run by Franciscans and the Bischöfliche Institut Vinzentinum in Brixen/Bressanone all took care of their own didactic permanent collections.

The general interest for collecting caught on with private individuals as well. In 1850 a k.u.k. “Central-Commission zur Erforschung und Erhaltung der Baudenkmale” (commission for preserving antique monuments) tried to obtain cultural assets with honorary officials, known as curators, although they had little support. They would often finance archaeological excavations with money out of their own pockets. This situation was beneficial to affluent amateur researchers who gladly took prestigious objects with them as compensation for the excavations. In 1818 provisions had been introduced which should have regulated the export and circulation of “works of art and curiosities” with a right of preemption for the Austrian Empire. However, these provisions remained de facto ineffective. Consequently art dealers had an easy time selling and/or sending important Iron Age metal assemblages abroad, like those from Obervintl/Vandois di Sopra and Greifenstein/Castel Grifo.

The outbreak of World War I and Italy’s entry into the war in early summer of 1915 interrupted archaeological endeavors. With the signing of the peace treaty in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, near Paris, on 10 September 1919, the regions South Tyrol and Trentino were given to Italy. With that

the crown land of Tyrol's historical archaeology came to an end. The victorious nation, Italy, called for restitution of cultural assets which was finally regulated with the Austrian-Italian art agreement of 4 May 1920. Austria pledged to return all cultural assets under state ownership. There were, however, exceptions to this rule such as all finds which came into imperial possession prior to 1790 or those which had been acquired by private collectors. In late summer of 1921 the restitution of archaeological finds from South Tyrol and Trentino had begun.

## CATALOGUE

A catalogue has been published for the exhibition detailing the origin and development of archaeology in the crown land of Tyrol. In addition to scientific entries which expand upon research of the time, displayed finds and artifact sites will be described and portrayed individually. Kaufmann, Günther and Putzer, Andreas (ed.): "Lost & Found. Archaeology in South Tyrol before 1919. Writings of the South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology 6 (2019). Publisher: Athesia-Tappeiner. ISBN 978-88-6839-424-0. Retail Price: ca. 35 €.

## VISITING THE EXHIBITION

Tickets and tours are available for booking at Tel. (0039) 0471 320100, [info@iceman.it](mailto:info@iceman.it) or online at <http://www.iceman.it/en/webticket-faq/>

## ASSOCIATED EVENTS

### **Tours of the Special Exhibition with the Curator**

with Günther Kaufmann, Curator of the South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology on **Wednesday 10 April 2019** at 17:30 (in German).

With Andreas Putzer, Archaeologist of the South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology on **Wednesday 8 May 2019**, 17:30 (in Italian).

The guided tour is included in the museum admission fee. Place: South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology, Bolzano, Museumstr. 43

### **Archaeological Excursion to Sinichkopf, the First Circular Rampart Discovered in Tyrol. Saturday, 1 June 2019, 15:00-18:00**

with Günther Kaufmann, Curator of the South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology (in German or Italian). The fever for circular ramparts and discovery stemmed from Meran; research on hillforts had its start here. They have long dominated archaeology in South Tyrol and have had a lasting impact on it.

The walking tour starts in Talboden (270 m) and climbs to an elevation of 530 m at Sinichkopf where there is a view of the confluence between the rivers Etsch and Falschauer. Requirements: surefootedness and sturdy footwear. This event will take place regardless of weather. Participation is free, however you must register by 30 May 2019 at Tel. 0471 320145 (during office hours). The meeting place will be shared with you at the time of booking.

## **1919 & Hugo – Aperitif in the Museum**

**every 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month from August to November 2019 at 17:30**

**(6 Aug. / 3 Sep. / 1 Oct. / 5 Nov. 2019)**

Short tour of the special exhibit “LOST & FOUND - Archaeology in South Tyrol before 1919”. An aperitif will follow.

Entry & Aperitif: 9,00 Euro per person. Admission/Meeting Point: 17:30. Reservations are not required. In German and Italian.

**Interactive Tour of the Special Exhibition for Secondary Schools** (50 min.). Details at

<http://www.iceman.it/en/schools/>

You can find further events on the Museum’s event calendar (only available in German and Italian)

[www.iceman.it/de/veranstaltung/](http://www.iceman.it/de/veranstaltung/)

## **SPECIAL THANKS TO THE LOANERS**

Amt für Bodendenkmäler der Autonomen Provinz Bozen/Bolzano, Antikensammlung – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Archäologisches Institut in Heidelberg, Bischöfliches Institut Vinzentinum in Brixen/Bressanone, British Museum London, Castello del Buonconsiglio Trento, Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nürnberg/Nuremberg, Fondazione Museo Civico di Rovereto, Kunsthistorisches Museum in Wien/Vienna, Milwaukee Public Museum, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg, Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Palais Mamming Museum Meran/Merano, Stadtmuseum Bozen/Bolzano, Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum Innsbruck and Ufficio Beni Archeologici della Provincia Autonoma di Trento.

## **IMPRESSUM “LOST & FOUND. Archaeology in South Tyrol before 1919”**

**General Management:** Angelika Fleckinger

**Exhibition Curators:** Andreas Putzer, Günther Kaufmann

**Exhibition Design:** Formbar Laurin Kofler, Lukas Mayr, Farbfabrik Philipp Putzer

**Exhibition Construction:** Haidacher

## **IMAGES**

<http://www.iceman.it/en/media-archive/>

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Photography is only allowed for current coverage of the exhibition.

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