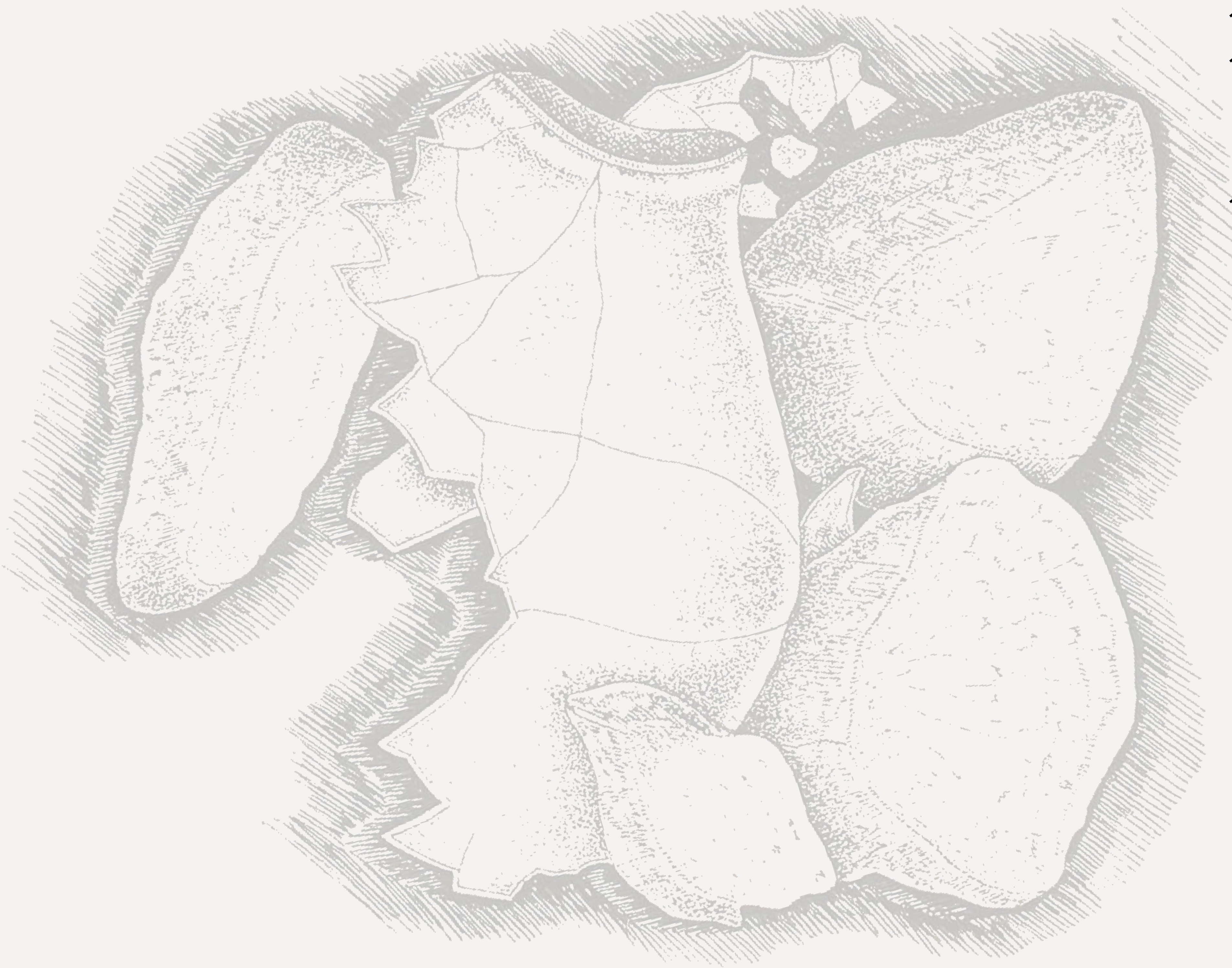


LATE BRONZE AGE REMAINS

The grave goods from the cemetery in Gusen are the remains of people who lived in the Gusen area 3400-3100 years ago and buried their dead there. The grave goods suggest that people imagined life after death to be similar to life in this world.

The objects demonstrate a high level of craftsmanship and a sense of aesthetics and representation that is still understandable to us today. The ceramic vessels were used for cooking, storing food and eating. The jewellery and clothing accessories (bracelets, pins), weapons and tools found in the graves were also used during the people’s lifetimes.



- 1 Bronze cup ‘Gusen type’, Gusen grave 5/1941
- 2 Bronze arm rings, Gusen grave 1/1941
- 3 Bronze knife with handle, Gusen Fst. 15/1941
- 4 Ribbed bronze arm ring, Gusen grave 1/1941
- 5 Multi-headed bronze pin, Gusen grave 5/1941
- 6 Bronze pin, Gusen grave 9/1942
- 7 Bronze ring, Gusen grave 5/1942
- 8 Bronze pin, Gusen grave 8/1942
- 9 Decorated bronze sheet fragment, Gusen grave 9/1942
- 10 Biconical ceramic vessel, Gusen grave 1/1941
- 11 Ceramic vessel with meander decoration, Gusen Fst. 31/1942
- 12 Ceramic vessel with two handles, Gusen grave 22/1942
- 13 Ceramic footed bowls, Gusen grave 22 / 1942
- 14 Ceramic footed bowls, Gusen grave 22/1942
- 15 Bronze spearhead, Gusen grave 5/1941
- 16 Bronze sword with flanged hilt-grip, Gusen grave 5/1941
- 1 – 16 Late Bronze Age, 1400 - 1100 BC, Christian Kosmas Mayer, Izidor Stern (based on originals in the Natural History Museum Vienna). First produced for Mayer’s artwork ‘Wetterleuchten am Horizont’ (2021), University of Education of the Diocese of Linz.
- 17 Stone axe fragment, Gusen Fst. 33/1942, Neolithic period, copy (original Natural History Museum Vienna)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS

at the Mauthausen-Gusen concentration camp complex

In addition to the main camp, the Mauthausen-Gusen concentration camp complex had around 40 sub-camps, including those in Melk and Günskirchen. The finds from the excavations carried out by the University of Vienna between 2009 and 2024 can mostly be divided into objects that can be linked to the detainees and objects that reveal the surveillance system.

The finds used by detainees include, for example, personal and self-made objects and simple, unbreakable crockery, mostly made of aluminium or enamel. Spoons are essential for eating.

Barbed wire and insulators represent surveillance and imprisonment. The SS guards used porcelain tableware from special SS porcelain manufacturers.

Lenders of all objects: Mauthausen Memorial

Objects used by detainees

- 1 Enamel bowl with KLM inscription on the bottom (abbreviation for Mauthausen concentration camp)
- 2 Aluminium pot converted into a sieve with the date 22.IX.41. Mauthausen concentration camp
- 3 Aluminium cup with engravings 'MF' 'BEB' "1940", 'FM', MF (manufacturer: Magyar Fémlemez Ipar R.T. Budapest). Günskirchen concentration camp
- 4 Aluminium lid/pan, SS billycan 1938–1945. Mauthausen concentration camp
- 5 Aluminium cup of the Wehrmacht, inscription: '1936', C&C.W. Melk concentration camp
- 6 Two steel spoons, essential for eating. Mauthausen concentration camp
- 7 Fragmented plastic comb. Mauthausen concentration camp
- 8 Various plastic buttons. Günskirchen concentration camp

Guards and surveillance

- 9 Barbed wire with insulators for electrifying the camp fence and porcelain insulators. Mauthausen concentration camp
- 10 Porcelain cup with the company logo Bohemia Keramische Werke (SS billycan manufacturer). Mauthausen concentration camp
- 11 Porcelain saucer with stamp: model of the Office for the Beauty of Work, (Modell des Amtes für Schönheit der Arbeit) swastika and Bausc mark (Bauscher Weiden company). Mauthausen concentration camp
- 12 Porcelain plate with stamp: Bauscher Weiden company logo, SS Reich, 1939

A LOOK AT THE LATE BRONZE AGE IN THE CONTEXT OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM

The Nazi regime’s interest in archaeology, especially prehistory, is ambiguous. The Nazi regime used archaeology to consolidate its ideology. Archaeological excavations and research were promoted. Archaeological sites were also given honorary patronage by the Hitler Youth.

The Reichsbund für Vorgeschichte (Federation of German Prehistory) and the Hitler Youth produced models, replicas and picture series of prehistoric graves, houses and people, which were used for educational purposes in museums and schools. This was intended to demonstrate the cultural superiority of the ‘Germanic, Aryan ancestors’ to the general population and thereby consolidate racial ideology.

- 1 Plaster figure of a Bronze Age woman, workshops of the Federation of German Prehistory 1939 (Lenders: Natural History Museum Vienna).
- 2 Plaster figure of a Bronze Age man, workshops of the Federation of German Prehistory 1939 (Lenders: Natural History Museum Vienna).
- 3 Pocket calendar for the year 1943, produced by detainees from Gusen (reproduction Mauthausen Memorial)

