

# **The Steppe and the Sown - New evidence for culture contacts and migration between South Siberia and Central Asia**

**Gino Caspari**

Universität Bern

Bern CH

## **Abstract**

From 2017 to 2019 excavation campaigns at Tunnug 1 in Tuva Republic started to unveil the cultural connections between one of the earliest horse-based nomadic economies and sedentary agricultural societies to the south. Documenting the Early Iron Age burial mound has not only resulted in insights into this period, but led to the discovery of a plethora of items from the Bronze Age to the Turkic period as well as 20 well-preserved human skeletons. The organic remains are in an excellent condition due to the climatic circumstances and the underlying permafrost. We present new finds and the far-reaching cultural connections which can be inferred from them. Based on a stylistic analysis of the objects as well as radiocarbon dating, stable isotope analyses ( $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ ,  $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ ,  $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ ) and ancient DNA investigations of the human remains, we will provide information about the region's complex history of migration painting a detailed picture of South Siberia's connections to the cultures of Central Asia and the importance of the Eurasian steppe belt for the transfer of ideas between East and West.