AVARS, BULGARS AND MAGYARS ON THE MIDDLE AND LOWER DANUBE

Edited by

LYUDMILA DONCHEVA-PETKOVA – CSILLA BALOGH – ATTILA TÜRK

ARCHAEOLINGUA

Studia ad Archaeologiam Pazmaniensiae

A PPKE BTK Régészeti Tanszékének kiadványai

Archaeological Studies of PPCU Department of Archaeology

Volume 1

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Proceedings of the Bulgarian-Hungarian Meeting,
Sofia, May 27–28, 2009

1892 - 1921 - 1948

National Institute of Archaeology
and Museum BAS
Sofia

Pázmány Péter Catholic University
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Department of Archaeology

СОФИЯ – PILISCSABA
2014

The publication of this volume was funded by the generous grants from the National Cultural Fund
(Nemzeti Kulturális Alap, NKA 3437/01022) and the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund
(Országos Tudományos Kutatási Alapprogramok, OTKA PUB-K 111155, OTKA K 7106369, OTKA NK 72636)

Front Cover
Detail from Bowl No. 21 of the Nagyszentmiklós Treasure by Imre Huszár

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ISBN 978-963-9911-55-0
HU-ISSN 1215-9239

ARCHAEOLINGUA
2014

ARCHAEOLINGUA ALAPÍTVÁNY
H-1014 Budapest, Úri u. 49.

Desktop editing and layout by Gergely Hős

Printed by Prime Rate Kft.

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FOREWORD

The readers hold in their hands the most recent and very tangible evidence of the traditionally good relationship between Hungarian and Bulgarian archaeologists since Géza Fehér's time. The deep historical roots of the friendship between these two nations, however, would not have sufficed in itself for a meaningful cooperation: for that we need joint thinking. In fact, collaboration is a must due to the close identity of certain historical structures and archaeological relationships. Namely, the ancestors of both peoples arrived from the east European steppe, from a common cultural milieu, to their present homelands; they both found during their respective conquests Slavic inhabitants; they both converted to Christianity; and the newly emerging material culture of both were strongly shaped by the cultural influence of Byzantium. Nevertheless, no matter how obvious the latter is, many archaeologists still have not yet recognized this factor and have not utilized it in their research approach. Beyond the above-mentioned parallels of history and material culture, in the past few decades such similarities have been found in the early medieval find material of both countries that raise fundamental methodological and cultural historical questions. For a long time, especially thanks to Géza Fehér's fundamental book, Bulgarian belt mounts have been known that were the closest relatives of – if not identical to – certain belt mounts of the Hungarian Conquest Period. It has also been widely accepted that a few ceramic sherds from Preslav had exactly the same kind of palmettes that are otherwise held characteristic for the conquering Hungarians. The case was similar with a few 7th–8th-century belt mounts from Bulgaria that were identical with so-called Avar mount types. These similarities were frequently referred to and illustrated by both Hungarian and Bulgarian scholars in their works, but in most cases they did not reach any far-reaching conclusions beyond establishing the fact. In the light of the above-mentioned new analogies, however, the situation has become very different. They raise the fundamental question, what these similarities actually mean. Indeed, what do typological or ornamental similarities and identities generally mean? In Bulgaria, "Avar" and "conquering Hungarian" belt types, furthermore the workshops that had produced them, have come to light in such large numbers that to invoke "connections" as explanation today is simply not satisfactory, and no-one thinks now of resettlement of whole populations from one place to the other (as happens in other similar cases in east central European research). At the same time it is also obvious that this phenomenon cannot be explained by the concept of "influence"; were it the Bulgarians, who influenced the Carpathian Basin, or were it the Avars and Hungarians who influenced Bulgaria? Their number and their joint importance in both countries have become so large that a new approach is needed. It has to be recognized that the close similarities and parallels stem from common cultural roots, whether we are talking about certain jewellery types, belt mounts or pottery: simply, the material culture of the Carpathian Basin and the northern Balkans – obviously differently and adapted to local circumstances – took over many things from Byzantium. Similarly, analogous finds from the Crimea and the east European steppe cannot be held *directly* and with certainty the remains of the Onogur Bulgars or the ancient Hungarians, but were in fact the local, idiosyncratic manifestations of Byzantine peripheral culture. This was actually a Steppe Commonwealth, represented by the various cultures of a multitude of peoples for the archaeologist.

While I greet the authors of the present volume, I am also looking forward to the publication of many similar works presenting the syntheses of central and east European archaeologists, that will reveal and analyze both the common and the unique characteristics of this vast and interesting world.

Csanád Bálint

INTRODUCTION

In the last nearly 20 years, an agreement for co-operation in the field of archaeology has been in place between the National Institute of Archaeology and Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (NIAM-BAS) and the Institute of Archaeology at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (IA-HAS). The subject of the project is *"Avars, Bulgars and Magyars on the Middle and Lower Danube"*.

This co-operation is implemented mainly through exchange of archaeologists who visit archaeological sites and museums, work at libraries and exchange ideas and publications – activities from which all participants in the project benefit hugely. Some time ago, together with Acad. Csanád Bálint we discussed the idea to extend the limits of our activities and to organize a bipartite meeting aimed at presenting newly found materials, comparing Avar, Bulgar and Magyar finds, sharing information about recent discoveries and opinions about the ethnic affiliation and the chronology of the archaeological monuments.

Such a meeting was organized and took place on the 27th and 28th of May 2009 in Sofia despite the difficulties and obstacles in the organizational process and the fact that not all participants in the project were able to attend. Presentations were made for the Hungarian party by Attila Türk and Péter Langó (IA-HAS, Budapest), Gergely Szenthe (Hungarian National Museum, Budapest), András Bíró (Hungarian Natural History Museum, Budapest), Gábor Fancsalszky (Cultural Heritage Department, Budapest), Csilla Balogh (Móra Ferenc Museum, Szeged) and Miklós Makoldi (Herman Ottó Museum, Miskolc). Participants from the Bulgarian party were Lyudmila Doncheva-Petkova and Evgenya Komatarova (NIAM-BAS, Sofia), Pavel Georgiev and Yanko Dimitrov (Shumen Branch of NIAM-BAS), Tsvetelin Stepanov and Maria Hristova (Sofia University), Nikolay Markov (National Museum of History, Sofia), Valentin Pletnyov and Valeri Yotov (Varna Regional Historical Museum), Ivo Topalilov and Kamen Stanev (Archaeological Museum, Plovdiv). The meeting was carried out with the support of Associated Professor György Szondi (Balassi Institute, Budapest) and Doc. Dr. Margarita Vaklinova, Director of the NIAM-BAS.

The subject of the meeting, *"Avars, Bulgars and Magyars on the Middle and Lower Danube"* is very important as it raises questions about similar, and in some cases, identical typical features of the material culture of Avars and Bulgars as well as those of Bulgars and Magyars. These ethnic groups were either connected to Slavic tribes, or they shared elements of the steppe culture or were influenced by the Byzantine Empire.

The archaeological excavations taking place both in Hungary and Bulgaria have yielded new finds, some of them related to the material cultures dated to the early medieval period. Apart from the popular ones, new opinions were expressed concerning the ethnic affiliation and the dates of important hoards such as those discovered at Nagyszentmiklós, Vrap-Erseke, etc.

When studying the Avars and the Bulgars, the question about their common, most probably Turkic, origin comes first. The Hungarian colleagues point out that various theories about the origin of the Avars have been developed in the last 200 years. Various hypotheses have been shared by specialists about their Central Asian or Middle Asian origin and the impact factors which caused changes during the various periods. The question about the origin of the Bulgars has a shorter history – it has been an issue for the last century and the main theories were published long time ago. It was almost generally believed that the Bulgars belonged to the Turkic-Altai linguistic and ethnic community together with Huns, Khazars, Avars, Oguzes, Pechenegs and Cumans. However, new hypotheses have been shared recently about the Irano-Alanian origin of the Bulgars, the Turkic origin of the nobility as well as the North Iranian (Alanian) ethnic elements of the main group of people, who settled down along the Lower Danube in the late 7th century.

Both the Avars and the Bulgars came from Central Asia. They shared the same migration route, which brought the Avars to Central Europe and the Bulgars to Central as well as to East Europe, a migration, which was part of the Barbarian Invasions (*Völkerwanderung*).

The information provided by the written sources concerning the settling down of the Bulgars in Europe has been known for a long time and has been discussed many times. There are three stages of their settling down in Pannonia: the first stage was in the early 5th century; the second – the one of the Kutrigurs, dated between 562 and 565 and the establishment of the First Avar Khaganate in 568; the third one was related to the defeat of Khan Qubrat's Old Great Bulgaria and the migration of Kuber's Bulgars in Pannonia and later to the Thessaloniki region. During the third stage, the Bulgars led by Khan Asparukh settled down on the Lower Danube.

Archaeologists from Hungary, as well as from Slovakia and Austria divide the material culture of the First and the Second Avar Khaganate into three periods approximately dated the following way: Early Avar Period (568–626, 626–650/670), Middle Avar Period (670–680/710) and Late Avar Period (710–725, 725–760, 760–830). This division is based on finds yielded by various types of sites providing information about settlement patterns, i.e. cemeteries and burial rituals, personal ornaments, arms, elements of horse harness and pottery.

The material culture of the First Bulgarian Kingdom (681–1018) is divided into two periods: pagan (681–864) and Christian period (864–1018), the pagan period being represented by Slavic and Bulgar settlements and cemeteries.

The written sources provide information about numerous Avar (Avaro-Slavic) attacks on the Balkans, which started in the 6th and the early 7th century. This data is verified by the archaeological excavations in present-day Bulgaria, which yield layers of fires and destructions in the Byzantine fortresses, small metal finds, arms (trilobate arrow points, bone plates of reflex bows), etc.

The establishment of the Bulgar state in 681 and the settling of the Bulgars to the south of the Lower Danube, the inner migrations of the Slavic tribes already living on the Balkans, the construction of the western border ramparts resulted in the further decrease of the already weakened Avar influence on the Balkans. It was also a time of change in Avar material culture, a change related by some scholars to the process of the settling of Kuber's Bulgars and the beginning of the Second Avar Khaganate.

There are certain Avar influences in the late 7th, the 8th and the early 9th centuries documented by finds yielded by cemeteries, settlements and fortresses dated to the First Bulgar Kingdom. Belt fashions sharing similar motifs, although differing in the preferred subject-matter as well as the production technique, developed in both countries during this period. Some of the most discussed ones are the Vrap–Erseke type of belt mountings and the constantly increasing number of finds from Bulgaria related to them.

The belt mountings have been the most discussed find until present. However, the archaeological excavations of Avar and Bulgar settlements, houses and especially cemeteries with thousands of burials provided extremely interesting information about the everyday life and military customs, burial rituals, religious beliefs and traditions as well as the physical anthropological type of the two ethnic groups. Future efforts have to be aimed at studying these sites because even a glance at their finds reveals a number of similar features.

The ways through which Bulgars and Magyars influenced each other's material culture did not differ very much. The first mention in the written sources about Magyars invading to the south of the Danube, who had shortly before that settled down in the Atelkuzu region (probably between the Prut and Seret Rivers), is dated to the 9th century. Urged by Byzantine diplomacy, in 895/896 the Magyars defeated the army of the Bulgarian king Simeon (893–927) and devastated present-day Northeastern Bulgaria. In the same year (896), the Pechenegs were given a fillip by the Bulgarians to move to the territories occupied by the Magyars, which made the latter shift westwards and conquer the *"new motherland"* situated between the Tisza, Maros and Körös Rivers. It is believed that the Magyar invasions to the south of the Lower Danube in the late 9th century and to the south of the Middle Danube in the early 10th century are related to certain details of the armour and horse-trappings – mainly sabers and stirrups. The direct link of these finds to a certain ethnic group is relevant since they mostly represent shared details of 10th century fashion. The very popular belt and strap mountings can also be considered an element of a common tradition, although there are certain characteristics which are typical of the finds related to each ethnic group. Traditions brought from the old territories as well as elements from Byzantine toreutics can be found in the Magyar belt and strap mountings manufactured after the Magyar's settling on the Middle Danube. The appliqués are often bigger in size and cast in silver. Hundreds of metal finds discovered in present-day Bulgaria are related to the Byzantine influence and the new artistic style established in the late 9th and the early 10th century in the Empire. The belt mountings from Bulgaria are smaller in size and are usually cast in bronze. The palmette in a heart-shaped frame is the most common motif. Recent excavations near the villages of Nadarevo, Novosel and Zlatar of production centers situated in the vicinity of the second Bulgarian capital city – Preslav – yielded proofs of the manufacture of such belt mountings in the 10th century. However, in Pliska such metal finds are yielded by layers dated from the late 10th century until the 1060s, which is the period of Byzantine domination. Since there are no parallels of such belt mountings in Byzantine toreutics, it can be assumed that these personal ornaments coming from an unreliable context had been used for a longer period; it is also possible that they were manufactured in the first decades of the Byzantine domination in Bulgaria (1018–1186). One way of solving the problem is to publish the finds from the excavated production centers and Pliska, to compare their shapes and ornamentation

and to make microspectral analyses. Another peculiarity also has to be mentioned – the Magyar materials include metal ornaments for decorating leather bags, quivers, women's boots, women's braids as well as heart-shaped pendants for necklaces. Such objects have not been discovered among the finds related to the Bulgar material culture until the late 10th century (until the collapse of the First Bulgarian Kingdom in 971). Such finds (round appliqués and heart-shaped pendants) were found in later Pecheneg cemeteries (dated to the mid 11th century) excavated in present-day Bulgaria.

The first Bulgarian-Hungarian meeting provided a forum for discussing only part of the problems faced by the specialists from Hungary and Bulgaria. More frequent contacts will provide forums for the specialist from both countries to report, present, compare and discuss early medieval monuments and finds. The Bulgarian-Hungarian meeting was accompanied by a small exhibition – finds and posters – presenting recent discoveries at the Bulgar cemetery excavated at Balchik. It is my sincere hope that this event will be the beginning of a long lasting and fruitful partnership.

Lyudmila Doncheva-Petkova

ETHNIC CHANGES IN PRESENT-DAY BULGARIA IN THE 6TH–9TH CENTURIES

Lyudmila Doncheva-Petkova

In the period when the Byzantine Empire was born and gained strength, the Balkan provinces became an arena of constant collisions between the Empire and the waves of invaders who were part of the Great Migrations, arriving from the north, northwest and especially from the east. The Goths and the Huns arrived first followed by the Bulgars, Slavs and Avars. While the presence of the Avars was only temporary – although very impressive – the Slavs and Bulgars permanently cast in their lot with the Balkan provinces of the Byzantine Empire. Settlements, houses, cemeteries and objects from the everyday and military life, which had remained from the time when these two components of the modern Bulgarian people settled down on the Balkans, were studied intensively. The question about the local population found on these territories by the two above mentioned ethnic groups, from which few traces had survived after the years of destruction and devastation, was raised many times. Another frequently raised question is the impact of the local cultural heritage of the Early Byzantine culture, including its earlier Hellenistic and Roman components, on the formation of the culture of the Bulgar Kingdom. Recent excavations prove that no direct influence was found not only to the north of the Balkan, on the territory of the former Moesia Inferior and Scythia Minor, devastated by the "*barbarian*" invasions, but also to the south of the Balkan in Thrace; the one which was found was of low significance. A number of the representative architecture and the elements of everyday life – certain pottery shapes and jewelry types – are not related to the "*Greek and Roman heritage*" but reflect the impact of contemporary, 8th–9th century Byzantine culture (Ваклинов 1977, 47–62; Рашев 2008, 337–338. with ref.).

The presence of the Slavs on the territory of modern Bulgaria in the 6th and 7th centuries is proved by written sources, linguistic data and results from archaeological excavations. Slavic settlements and cemeteries were excavated mainly in the 1960s and 1970s while in the last two decades the excavations on such sites have been very few. St. Angelova recognizes several Slavic waves, several groups of Slavs whose arrival is also mentioned in this article (Ангелова et al. 1997, 141–154).

Burnt layers yielding coins, buried coin hoards, mainly fragmented pottery and radiate-head bow fibulae are related to the Slavic invasions (*Fig. 1*). About 30 sites yielding Early Slavic pottery and several sites yielding radiate-head bow fibulae with shapes similar to ones yielded by Slavic assemblages outside Bulgaria have been already found. There are almost 15 fortresses in Northern Dobrudzha as well (Ангелова 1997, 486–487; Ангелова–Колева 2000, 160–172, таб. 1–9). Slavic ceramic vessels are among the most typical finds pointing to the presence of Slavic groups. Handmade pottery was found in the fortresses along the Danube limes – biconical jars with a sharp or rounded carination at the largest diameter of the body. There are also jars with fine proportions and rounded body with a short, slightly inverted rim, whose largest diameter is at the shoulders (there are also elongated jars with rounded bodies and short everted rims, whose largest diameter is at the shoulders). As a whole, the dominant pottery yielded by the fortresses is of the Penkovka type or a combination of the Penkovka and Prague types. Such jars have been known since the early phases of the Penkovka culture in Ukraine and Moldova from where the Slavs penetrated into the settlements in Eastern Romania and the fortresses along the Danube. The earliest evidence for Slavic presence proved by pottery and coins of Emperor Justinian issued in 539/540 yielded by a burnt layer comes from Troesmis in North Dobrudzha. Numerous buried coin hoards are dated to the second half of the 6th, first decades of the 7th centuries. The latest coin finds come from Tomis, Callatis and present-day Veliko Tarnovo – until 629–632 (Ангелова 1997, 488; Ангелова–Колева 2000, 162). The circumstances in which the majority of the archaeological finds have been discovered support the thesis of I. Dujchev, V. Beshevliev and M. Comşa that during their early settling to the south of the Danube, the Slavs had the status of *foederatae*. The domination of the Penkovka type of pottery provides reason to assume that most of the Slavs-*foederatae* belonged to the Antae group (Ангелова 1997, 489; Ангелова–Колева 2000, 163). These Slavs have not left settlements and cemeteries of their own. Their further fate is unknown. There is no distinct genetic and chronological connection between them and the bearers of the later Popina-Garvan group.

The archaeological and historical data reveal that some of the fortresses along the Scythian limes and the Black Sea littoral continued to function after the Slavic arrival although in a highly modified form. This situation is typical for South Bulgaria mainly.

The later Slavic group, the so-called Popina-Garvan, named after the sites where it was identified for the first time, is the Bulgarian version of the North Moldavian Hlinca I (*Fig. 2*). It has been suggested that the bearers of this culture had belonged to the tribal union of the Sclavinae. The reasons why these Slavs left the territories they had previously inhabited in West Ukraine and North Moldova, have not been completely explained. M. Comşa supposes that the Slavs migrated to the west and south as a result of the new migrations of the steppe people in the 660s and 670s, including the migration of the Asparukh's Bulgars (Ангелова 1997, 499). After they had crossed the Danube, the Slavs settled down in North Dobrudzha, in the Tulcea region and in South Dobrudzha, to the west of Silistra (Бъжарова 1965; Бъжарова 1986, 8–15; Милчев–Ангелова 1971, 22–27, таб. XV. 2–4). The settlements at the villages of Nova Cherna, Popina, Garvan and the Srebarna Reserve (Silistra region) are partially excavated. They are situated on low hills in marshy areas and even on river islands. The houses discovered in the lower and the middle building levels are rectangular or quadrangular semi-subterranean houses with trampled or plastered clay floors, walls made of wattle-and-daub or wooden logs, and stone ovens in one of the corners. The pottery is handmade or turned; it is made from clay mixed with large organic inclusions. The pottery shapes include truncated conical jars with large mouth and slightly inverted rim (sometimes decorated with finger impressions) with or without incised ornament and pans (Бъжарова 1965, обр. 3. 3–5; 4. 3, 12; 13. 3, 21; 24. 3. etc.; Колева 1992, 169–170, таб. I–II).

Cemeteries with cremation burials have been excavated, showing that the cremated human bones

Fig. 1: Late Antique fortresses yielding Slavic artifacts, 6th to early 7th centuries

were most often put in ceramic vessels and buried in the ground or were placed in pits as well as, in few cases, in small chambers made from stones or bricks. So far the appearance of the pagan cemeteries in Dobrudzha cannot be dated prior to the second half or the end of the 7th century. This date is based mainly on the early Slavic Hlinca I pottery type discovered in the cemeteries at Popina and Garvan (Въжарова 1976, 108–110, обр. 81). Beside the typical frustum shaped Slavic jars made from sandy clay and sometimes decorated with wavy or straight lines, the Garvan cemetery yielded a considerable number of jars made from fine gray clay, with burnished or pattern burnished surface (Въжарова 1976, 11–38; Колева 1992, 170–171). Based on the pottery and some of the rituals, the specialists have suggested that the Garvan and Popina cemeteries must have belonged to a Slavic population which migrated from Moldova to Dobrudzha (Comșa 1972, 23–24; Comșa 1973, 220–221). They were in contact with people from the steppes, which contributed other elements of the culture attested in these cemeteries. The excavated settlements at Popina and Garvan should also be dated to the second half of or the late 7th century, as well as the entire Early Slavic culture defined in Northeast Bulgaria. The cemetery at the village of Babovo, Russe region is also worth mentioning; it yielded jars varying in shape and way of manufacture. In one and the same burial a vessel made on a potter's kick wheel was used as an urn and the cremated bones were covered by fragments of handmade pottery or fragments of thrown or turned pottery or vice versa – the pot containing the ashes was handmade and was covered by fragments of pottery made on a kick wheel. Very often in burials yielding more than one vessel there is one handmade piece of pottery while the rest is thrown or turned – the former made from sandy clay and decorated with incised ornaments, and the latter are made from fine clay and are pattern burnished (Въжарова 1976, 39–40, 57. Burial № 48; Колева–Даскалов 1993, 159–165). These

Fig. 2: Slavic settlements and cemeteries, 7th–9th centuries

vessels suggest different ethnic traditions: a simultaneous use of Slavic as well as Bulgar pottery in a typical Slavic cemetery, a fact which might indicate contacts between the two ethnic groups. This pottery assemblage could also be interpreted as proof in favour of the hypothesis that the Slavs from the Popina-Garvan group came to the Balkans together with the Bulgars. This can also provide explanation for the prevalence of gray burnished pottery in the excavated cemeteries at the village of Yuper, Razgrad region and the Targovishte region.

Another Slavic group named "*Razdelna type*" is attested along the Black Sea littoral, Northeast Bulgaria and North Dobrudzha. The settlement at the village of Blaskovo, Varna region yielded semi-subterranean houses as well as an oval one, defined as a "*yurt-shaped house*" (Димитров 1975, 228–230, обр. 1. 7). The cemetery at Razdelna is the most typical of the cemeteries believed to have belonged to this group. 231 burials were excavated on an area of 3000 m^2. The cremated human bones had most often been placed in urns or in urns, which sometimes were enclosed and covered by stones or bricks (83 burials). In nine cassette graves the bones were deposited without having been placed in an urn. In only 18 graves were the cremated human bones deposited in small pits. 30 burials yielded cremated and semi-cremated animal bones as well as egg shells (Димитров 1978, 121–123). The pottery had been made on a slow potter's wheel and both main groups of ware were found – the ware made from sandy clay and decorated with incisions (the bulk of pottery 90.87%, displaying a considerable variety of shapes) and the pattern burnished ware made from fine clay (spherical and spherical-conical jars, a biconical jug, a plate) (Димитров 1978, 123–124, таб. VI–XIV; Fiedler 1992, Taf. 57–91).

Studies on Northeast Bulgaria are limited (Даскалов 2009). A Slavic settlement yielding coarse, thick walled pottery that can be related to the pottery along the Lower Danube, was established in the 7th century on top of the ruins of the ancient Dorticum (at the village of Vrav, Vidin region). The settlement continued to function until the 10th century. Slavic settlements were found on the left bank of the Tsibritsa River, at the villages of Yakimovo and Valchedram and the town of Montana. Cemeteries providing important results were excavated – these were the ones at the villages of Dolni Lukovit, Pleven region, Bukyovtsi (present-day town of Mizia) and Galiche, Vratsa region. It is assumed that the Slavs inhabiting this region migrated most probably from present-day Slovakia and the western regions of present-day Romania – the Mediaş group dated back to the 7th–9th centuries (Ангелова 1997, 508–509).

Central North Bulgaria has not been studied thoroughly, but there is information about a Slavic settlement on the Tsarevets hill in Veliko Tarnovo and at the village of Hotnitsa, Veliko Tarnovo region. Another site yielding material which can be related to Slavs who migrated from Muntenia, is the medieval settlement on top of the Late Antique *castellum* Yatrus at the present-day village of Krivina, Russe region. The pottery had been made on a slow potter's wheel and was decorated with incisions. It is suggested that in the early period of the settlement, the pottery was made by craftsmen with special skills and for this reason its quality was higher. The pottery is dated to the late 7th century (Wendel 1986, 137, 209, Abb. 64, Taf. 23. 3–7). In contrast to the pottery of the Popina-Garvan group, which is made from quite coarse clay with inclusions of sand and limestone pieces, the Krivina pottery is made from finer clay. In the later phases of the site, until the 10th century, the pottery was coarser and the decoration was of lower quality (Ангелова 1997, 510).

Two cemeteries at the village of Varbovka yielding cremation burials are partially excavated. There the cremated human bones were put in pots (Въжарова 1976, 80).

Slavic settlements are found to the south of the Balkan, and they are usually situated on top of the ruins of ancient fortresses, for example, Serdica, Hisarya, Plovdiv, Konstantia, etc. An early Slavic unfortified settlement situated at the frontier-post near the village of Kapitan Andreevo, Svilengrad region, at the Bulgarian-Turkish border, was recently excavated. Thirteen Slavic semi-subterranean houses and ten pits were unearthed on a large field with Iron Age pits. The excavators have divided the pottery into three groups: handmade pottery, turned pottery and Byzantine pottery made on potter's kick wheel (fragments of amphorae, plates, bowls and jars). The establishment of the settlement is dated to the period after the last Avar invasion in 626, and its end is dated by a coin of Emperor Constantine VI (789–797) (Попов 2009, 46; Гроздановa 2009, 59, таб. 1–9). A Slavic settlement was also discovered at the village of Piperkov chiflik, Kyustendil region. Four semi-subterranean houses, each of them with a stone or brick oven in one of the corners as well as several garbage pits, were discovered. The pottery assemblage consisting of jars and pans is dated ca. to the 7th–8th century (Спасов 2007, 103). As early as the beginning of the 19th century, Karel and Hermengild Škorpil reported a secondary pot burial found in a Thracian burial mound near the village of Kamen vrah, Yambol region. A small iron knife was found in the pot among the cremated human bones. It was suggested that the burial was a Slavic

one (Въжарова 1976, 81). The two-chambered Late Antique brick tomb in the Bela voda living quarter in Pernik, destroyed by the charcoal mines, is also worth mentioning. One of the chambers was reopened, and four Slavic pots with cremated human bones were placed in the ashes of the primary burial (Dončeva–Lûbenova 2004, 69–74, Abb. 1–4). No other Slavic burials or cemeteries were discovered to the south of the Danube on the territory of present-day Bulgaria.

The burnt layers in the Byzantine fortresses, the trilobate arrow points, the bone elements of reflex bows and the single-edged swords provide proof for the numerous Avar attacks (sometimes in alliance with Slavs and Bulgars) on the Balkans during the period from the First Khaganate until 626 (Тотев 2004, 16). The Late Antique unfortified settlement near the present-day village of Odartsi, Dobrich region was most probably destroyed by a Slavic-Avar attack in the second decade of the 7th century. The burnt houses dated to this period (the latest coin belongs to Emperor Phocas (602–610) yielded trilobate Avar arrow points and the church yielded fragments of Slavic handmade pots (Дончева-Петкова et al. 1999, 65, обр. 113. 103).

In relation to our conference, special attention has to be paid to the Bulgar finds and possible connections and similar elements with Avar monuments and materials have to be explored.

According to the written sources, after the death of khan Kubrat and the collapse of "*Old Great Bulgaria*" in 651, the Bulgar tribes living in the area between Kuban, the Sea of Azov and the Don River parted under the Khazar pressure. With regard to Bulgarian history, the movement of the Bulgar tribes ruled by Kubrat's third son – Asparukh – is the most important. Theophanes and Nicephoros wrote that the Bulgars crossed the Dnieper and Dniester Rivers, went westwards to the Danube and settled down in the so-called Onglos, the southernmost part of the territory enclosed by the Prut, Seret and the Danube Rivers, where traces of the Galats fortified camp were discovered, and became neighbours with Slavic tribes. This happened in the 660's. The Byzantine writers are very certain that after settling down to the north of the Danube estuary, Asparukh's Bulgars used to cross the river many times and attack the territories situated to the south of the river. The campaign undertaken against them by the Byzantine Emperor Constantine IV (668–685) in 680 ended with a victory for the Bulgars, who crossed the Danube, reached Odessos (the present-day town of Varna) and conquered the entire territory to the north of the Stara Planina Mountain. After settling down on the Balkans, the Bulgars settled their relations with the neighbouring Slavic tribes (the seven Slavic tribes and the Severs) and continued the war against the Byzantine Empire. The Empire had to accept the loss of the territories to the north of the Balkan and to sign a peace treaty with the Bulgars in the summer of 681, which became the official recognition of the Bulgar Kingdom.[1] Various opinions were expressed on the nature of the new state unit. Some authors believe that it was a result of the Bulgars activity only. Many specialists accept that the new state was established as a result of the joint activity of Bulgars and Slavs, found there by the Bulgars or arriving with them to the south of the Danube, becoming allies in the war against the Byzantine Empire. The state was headed by the ruler of the Bulgars – khan Asparukh – and Pliska became the capital city. There are no written sources which provide information about acts of hostility between the Bulgars and the Slavs.

The foundation of the Bulgar state, the settlement of the Bulgars on the territories to the north of the Balkan, the change of the territories inhabited by Slavic tribes, the construction of the western defensive border ramparts – all these events remind of the dislodgement of the Avars to the west from the territories of the Lower Danube. At the same time, some changes occurred in the culture of the Khanate, which according to some scholars can be associated with the settling of Kuber's Bulgars and indicate the beginning of the Second Avar Khaganate. What is the information provided by archaeological research?

As we know, no ail settlements similar to the Saltovo-Mayatski ones were discovered in Bulgaria. The number of early medieval settlements in various stages of excavation, which emerged after the establishment of the state, is considerably lower compared to the number of the excavated cemeteries (*Fig. 3*). Both excavations and field surveys reveal that some of them functioned as fortified centers – Pliska as well as the *auls* Drastar, Kabiûk, Preslav, Omurtag's aul at the present-day village of Khan Krum, Shumen region, and others were fortresses established on naturally fortified places which had not been inhabited in the previous centuries, on strategic points on the Danube, on important roads inland or on top of the ruins of Late Antique fortresses. The unfortified villages were the most numerous; they were situated in the plain

[1] *История на България*. София 1981, 98–100.

around the Danube and the Black Sea, along river valleys or clustered around fortresses.

The question of the establishment of early medieval settlements is complicated and related to long-term researches. The latest coins and coin hoards yielded by the remains of Early Byzantine fortresses provide indirect information about the time when they were destroyed. The excavated pagan cemeteries related to a number of settlements provide information on the beginning of the occupation of a settlement, since regular cemeteries emerge as a result of the establishment of regular settlements. Settlements and biritual cemeteries associated with them were located at Capul Viilor-Istria (North Dobrudzha, Romania), Topola, Nozharevo, Hitovo, Velino, Kyulevcha and Bdintsi (Northeastern Bulgaria), but only some of them have been studied. The distance between the pagan cemeteries and the settlements vary – from 150 m (Capul Viilor-Istria) to 400 m (Velino), 600 m (Hitovo 2) and 800 m (Topola).

Twenty-seven semi-subterranean houses were excavated in the settlement near the village of Topola, Dobrich region. They were quadrangular or rectangular in plan, and small rooms for economic activities were attached to some of them. The house walls were faced with stones and clay, and the ovens were made from stones. Some houses yielded grinding stones evidencing the importance of farming. There are two semi-subterranean houses whose walls were not faced with stones (Бобчева 1976, 122–130; Бобчева 1982, 100–101, 104). Four pottery kilns were excavated as well as a forge for manufacturing iron tools. Two of the pottery kilns were set up with gray burnished ware, the third one with sandy clay ware with incised decoration and the fourth with clay caldrons with inner lugs (Бобчева 1977, 172–276; Бобчева 1980, 126–130, таб. I–VII; Бобчева 1981, 198–199, обр. 1. 2; Бобчева 1982, 100–101, таб. II. 1–2). None of the other excavated settlements yielded so many and so varied sherds of gray burnished ware. The unearthed pottery kilns

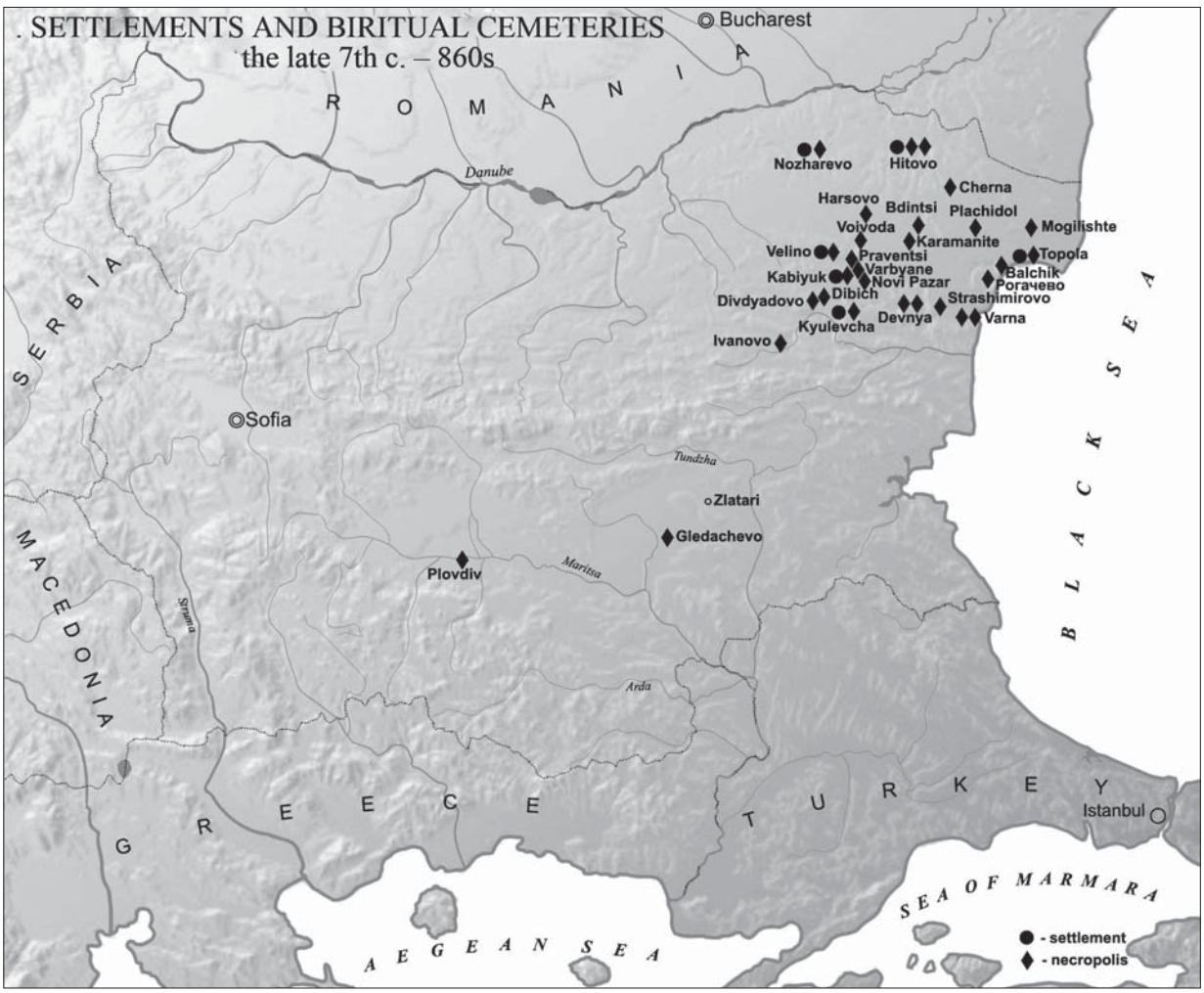

Fig. 3: Settlements and biritual cemeteries, 7th century to 860s

explain this abundance. They also provide explanation of the question why the cemetery yielded such a variety of pottery, and why it is identical to the one from the settlement. Various types of jars, jugs, bucket-shaped beakers, bowls (some of them of rare types) were found beside the burials as well as sherds from ritually broken cauldrons. The settlement probably functioned until the mid-9th century, and after that it was abandoned for unknown reasons. Undoubtedly the kilns were set up at this moment. Special attention was drawn on the settlement at the village of Topola because although it is not completely excavated, we have considerably more information about it compared to other settlements associated with biritual cemeteries. This settlement provides undeniable proof for a settled population practicing farming, stockbreeding, fishing, pottery manufacturing and forging. The houses in the medieval settlement at Capul Viilor-Istria (situated to the south of the cemetery) were also semi-subterranean houses. There were only two houses found; they were both faced with stones, but in one of them Roman bricks were also reused for the facing. Traces from the sockets of the posts supporting the roof and stone ovens were also found in both houses. Vl. Zirra emphasizes that the pottery from the settlement is identical with the one from the cemetery (Зирра 1963, 401–404, обр. 30–34).

A medieval settlement, to which the cemetery Hitovo 2 or Hitovo 3(?) belonged, was located to the west of the village of Hitovo, Dobrich region. A vaulted oven and a semi-subterranean house faced with stones were excavated there (Йотов 1997, 156).

The medieval settlement at the village of Nozharevo, Silistra region is also partially excavated. It is situated on a flat area in a deep and narrow valley. Two semi-subterranean houses cut into the virgin soil with stone ovens in the corner were excavated. The biritual cemetery occupies the high part of the river terrace above the settlement and is connected to it (Рашев–Станилов 1989, 214, обр. 1).

In 2005 an early medieval settlement was discovered in the northern part of Pliska field, near the present-day village of Velino, Shumen region. A rectangular semi-subterranean house cut into the virgin soil with a horse-shoe shaped stone oven in the northeastern corner and postholes, indicating the spots of the posts supporting the roof, was excavated there. Grain storage pits were unearthed in the southern part of the semi-subterranean house and outside it, beside its southeastern corner. The semi-subterranean house yielded pottery sherds, bone awls and a fragment of a melting pot for non-ferrous metal casting (Димитров–Стоянова 2009, 95–97).

There is no doubt that the already excavated biritual cemeteries, such as the one at Balchik, belong to settlements which have not been found yet. The excavated settlements reveal that the main house type was the semi-subterranean house typical for settled farmers. It is known that the earlier building levels of several settlements, such as Kladentsi, Garvan, Nova Cherna and Blaskovo (Димитров 1975, 228–230) yielded remains of single oval or yurt-shaped houses. They were cut into the ground between the regular semi-subterranean houses and have to be interpreted as relicts from the semi-nomadic way of life. The main occupations of the people who lived in the village were farming and stockbreeding. In some villages pottery manufacturing, iron and non-ferrous metal processing, bone and leather manufacturing, wood processing, etc. were also practiced. As it has already been mentioned, the pottery center in Kovanlaka locality near the village of Topola manufactured pottery typical of the settled population, as well as clay cauldrons with inner lugs which were perhaps used by stockbreeders pasturing their herds in the region. The pottery yielded by the settlements is identical with that yielded by the biritual cemeteries, but is much more fragmented.

The Avars inhabited the same settlements and houses – semi-subterranean houses with posts supporting the roof and stone or clay ovens. It seems that the settlements were not constructed following a special planning. It is assumed that the houses were separated by simple ditches (Балинт 1995, 47, рис. 1; Дайм 2002, 304–305, 316, Taf. 17). Grain storage pits, similar to the ones found only in Velino, Bulgaria, were not discovered in the settlements because the grain was stored in ceramic vessels. Ceramic vessels containing carbonized wheat were unearthed in a 10th century house in Odartsi, Dobrich region, where grain storage pits were also not found (Дончева-Петкова et al. 1999, 147, № 138). There are no published Avar semi-subterranean houses faced with stones. The analyzed animal bones from the settlements (mainly from cattle and pigs) also indicate a settled population (Балинт 1995, 47–48; Vida 2003, 306).

Impressive stone construction work – defensive walls, residential buildings and palaces, sanctuaries and baths – took place in the early 9th century in the capital city of Pliska and the related auls at the village of Khan Krum, Kabiyuk, Preslav and Drastar. The Bulgarians are extremely proud of these monuments because such buildings have been found neither in the rest of the Slavic countries nor on the territory of the Avar Khaganate.

More than 30 biritual cemeteries have been located from the 1950s and 1960s until present

(*Fig. 3*). They are situated in the conquered territories to the south of the Danube – in Dobrudzha and Northeastern Bulgaria. The number of the burials in these biritual cemeteries is not high in contrast with the Avar ones where the number of burials can reach 1000 (Балинт 1995, 47). The Topola cemetery, which is not completely excavated, yielded the highest number of burials 460. It is followed by the Bdintsi cemetery with 307 burials and the Balchik cemetery with ca. 290 burials. The rest of the cemeteries yielded considerably lower number of burials (some of them were destroyed). It is probably due to the fact that the cemeteries dated back to the pagan period were in use no longer than a century or two, until the conversion to Christianity in 864. Few Christian burials dated to a later period were found in these cemeteries, and the cemeteries were abandoned soon after that. Christian cemeteries were established at new places.

It has to be mentioned that the Avar cemeteries, similarly to the ones excavated in Bulgaria, were situated at a considerable distance from the settlements. Csanád Bálint points out that the question about the identity of those buried in rich male graves in the cemeteries dated to the Late Avar period remains unanswered: were the deceased representatives of the Middle Avar estate, were they warriors or noblemen? Unlike the Early Avar period, no burial of a representative of the highest levels of society dated to the Late Avar period has been found. Since the rich burials in the Hortobágy-Árkus cemetery were found 4 m below the modern surface, the author assumes that the burials of the Avar nobility have not been discovered yet (Балинт 1995, 47).

The biritual cemeteries in Bulgaria are situated in various locations – on top of a hill (Kyulevcha), on river banks (Novi Pazar, Dibich), on river terraces (Hitovo 2, Hitovo 3), on terraces of hilly areas (Bdintsi, Varna I, Devnya 1, Devnya 3), beside earlier burial mounds or in their fill (Topola, Balchik on a plateau above the sea littoral) (Вължарова 1976, 84; Дончева-Петкова et al. 1989, 187; Йотов 1989, 221). Cremation and inhumation burials were found next to each other (*Fig. 4. 1*).[2] The cremation burials (usually discovered at a lower depth compared to the inhumation burials) display several types of burial construction – grave pits of various shapes (round, ellipsoid, rectangular, quadrangular or irregular) (*Figs. 5. 1–2*), chambers made from bricks or stones (*Figs. 5. 3–4*), as well as urn burials which are similar to Slavic cremation burials – the ashes of the dead were placed in urns and buried in small pits. The ashes were placed in turned jars, made from sandy clay and decorated with incisions, as well as in pattern burnished jars made from fine clay. Both the chamber and the pit burials yielded jars which were placed next to the ashes of the deceased – jars made from sandy clay as well as various pots made from fine gray, gray-black and ochre-red clay – jars, jugs, amphora-shaped pitchers, plates, bowls, bucket-shaped beakers. These vessels contained food or drink. No urn burials were found so far in the Balchik cemetery, which in my opinion is the earliest among the biritual cemeteries. The studies of physical anthropologists reveal that some of the cremation burials contain remains of two or three individuals – two adults or an adult and a child.

The inhumation burials were designed in a different way. Predominantly, the dead were placed in rectangular or trapezoid grave pits (*Figs. 5. 5–6*). There are burials lined with one, two or more stones (*Fig. 6. 1*), burials covered with stones and cist burials – lined and covered with stone slabs (*Figs. 6. 2–3*). The most common type is that of burials in ordinary rectangular or trapezoid pits. In the cases when animals were also placed in the burial, there is an enlargement at one of the long sides of the grave pit or at the narrow southern side, at the feet. The depth of the grave pits varies and in some of the cemeteries it reaches 1.80–2.50 m. The children's burials are the shallowest ones. The orientation also varies, but N–S is the prevailing one, the deviations being more often to the east than the west. Almost all cemeteries yield E–W oriented burials, dominating especially in Hitovo 2 (Йотов 1989, 225; Йотов 1997, 155) and Hitovo 3 (Йотов 1991, 101). Single E–W oriented burials have been uncovered in Cherna (Василчин 1989, 200), Devnya 1 (Димитров 1971, 61), Devnya 3 (Димитров 1972, 49), Bdintsi (Вължарова 1976, 141; Вължарова 1981a, 81), and recently in Balchik – 6 burials. The number of S–N oriented burials is very low: in Nozharevo (Рашев–Станилов 1989, 214), Devnya 1 (Димитров 1971, 61), Devnya 3 (Димитров 1972, 49), Varna 1 (Димитров 1976, 110), Balchik (2 burials). There are also W–E oriented burials, and while in most of the cases the pagan element prevail, e.g. Kyulevcha (Вължарова 1976, 86), Balchik (2 burials), Cherna (Василчин 1989, 200), in very few cases Christian elements were detected as well, e.g. in Hitovo (2–3 burials) (Йотов 1989, 222). Most probably several burial from the cemetery at Topola are also Christian (Ангелова et al. 1997, 143). They were situated in the southeastern periphery of the cemetery; they were lined with stones and yielded no grave goods.

[2] The article presents information provided by the recently excavated cemetery at Balchik.

Their number is higher (29) in Devnya 3 (Димитров 1972, 49; Димитров 1974, 69) and Karamanite (?) (Рашев–Красилников 2007, 98). There are two interesting burials in the cemetery at Balchik: one of the burials is N–S oriented and the second one is W–E oriented, situated at a right angle and is connected with it (*Fig. 4. 2*). In both cases the burials are made observing all pagan ritual rules, which becomes obvious from the position of the arms and the grave goods in the grave pit. The deceased were most often placed on their back, with extended arms and legs. The position of the arms, which differs from that mentioned above, is an exception. Almost all cemeteries yield pseudo-crouched burials. Most of them are female burials; their orientation often differs from the main orientation in the cemetery and they contain no grave goods (Димитров 1974, 69). This suggests that they were burials of people suspended or neglected by the community. Three burials excavated in Devnya 3 and Varna 1 cemeteries are especially interesting – two individuals were placed in a pseudo-crouched position in each grave pit (Димитров 1974, 71, обр. 17). Another interesting burial was excavated at the Topola cemetery: burial № 135 yielded three individuals – a 50 year old male, a 45–50 year old female and a 15 year old juvenile male. All three were buried in a pseudo-crouched position. Artificial cranial deformation is detected most often on children's and female skulls and more rarely on male skulls, e. g. in the cemeteries at Novi Pazar (Станчев–Иванов 1958, 34), Devnya 1 (Димитров 1974, 74), Balchik (Русева 2009, 207–208) and Topola it reaches 40% (Ангелова et al. 1997, 143). The physical anthropological study carried out by Dr. S. Cholakov revealed that the skulls of the female and the juvenile male from the triple pseudo-chrouched burial in Topola were artificially deformed. Ritual cranial trepanations were not attested and probably had not been practiced. Charcoals and mortar were placed in burials as precautions. Some burials at Devnya 1 and Devnya 3 (Димитров 1974, 72–73) and Karamanite (Рашев–Красилников 2007, 97) yielded evidence for post mortal destruction of the skeletons – cutting off or tying up the feet, placing stones on top of the dead body (Димитров 1974, 85). In pagan cemeteries the deceased were placed alone in the grave pits. Double (an adult and a child usually) or triple (the abovementioned grave in the Topola cemetery) burials are an exception. The published mass graves excavated at the periphery of the two biritual cemeteries at Kyulevcha and Devnya 3 are worth mentioning here. The burial at Kyulevcha yielded the skeletons of 25 hurriedly buried young males placed in an elongated grave pit of irregular shape (10.20 m long, 0.65–1.70 m wide and 0.40–0.65 m deep). The lowest 10 dead bodies were N–S oriented and more assiduously placed, while the rest were thrown on top of the other in the narrow section of the grave pit, the majority of them E–W oriented (Въжарова 1976, 126–135). It is assumed that the buried people were warriors, killed in a battle, related to the events in 811 when the Byzantine Emperor Nicephorus I (802–811) burned down the nearby capital city of Pliska (Рашев 2008, 203. with ref.). The second mass grave was excavated in the Devnya 3 cemetery. It is a ring shaped pit with a diameter measuring 5.48–5.78 m; it is 1.20 m wide at the upper part and narrows to 0.20 m at a depth of 2.20 m. The pit yielded 76 skeletons, young females and children mainly, and only 3 male skeletons (Димитров–Маринов 1974, 109; Fiedler 1992, 318–319). Most of the authors tend to believe that this structure can be dated to the period of the persecution of Christians when knyaz Vladimir-Rasate made an attempt to restore Paganism (Димитров–Маринов 1974, 127–128). The structure is also interpreted as a sacrifice to the supreme pagan god during these events (Станчев 1991, 82–86).

The anthropological studies of human remains yielded by biritual cemeteries reveal that the buried individuals were Caucasians with slightly Mongoloid features (Kondova–Cholakov 1997, 89, Fig. 8).

Hungarian archaeologists report that shaft-shaped graves dated back to Middle Avar period were uncovered in the cemeteries as well as graves with a niche at the long side. Graves sealed with several stones were also unearthed in the Carpathian Basin (Simon 1993, Fig. 2–3, 9–11, 13).[3] The Avar burials are usually W–E orientated, but there are Middle Avar N–S and SE–NW oriented burials as well. The Avar burials were usually supine, and there are few burials in which the position of the arms differs from the standard one. Crouched and semi-crouched Avar burials were also uncovered. Some of them yielded skulls with traces of ritual trepanation (Балинт 1995, 44).

Apart from the way the diseased was buried, common burial rituals are attested in both cremation and inhumation burials in the biritual cemeteries along the Lower Danube – breaking ceramic vessels, placing ritual food and drink at the head, the feet or at the side of the dead body. The food in the cremation burials consisted of small pieces of meat from which burnt and more often unburnt animal bones survived. A low number of burials yielded

[3] I would like to thank Csilla Balogh for the provided information.

large parts or complete animals (lambs, pigs). Complete animals or parts of them – sheep, goats, calves, cows, cattle or birds – were placed at the head, beside the dead body, but most often they were placed on top of the legs of the skeleton in the inhumation burials. An especially large number of such burials were found in the Balchik cemetery, where 15 burials, deeply cut into the virgin soil, yielded bones of large animals – cows, cattle and calves. The animals had been chopped up into large pieces and then put in the grave pit without any parts missing. One of the burials in the Balchik cemetery yielded an imprint of cattle skin, which suggests that the skin had been removed from the animals before chopping them up. In other three connected burials bones of two cows, a calf and two lambs were discovered. The studies on the osteological remains by Lazar Ninov revealed that the animals had been cut up along the tendons by an experienced person leaving the bones intact. Cremation and inhumation burials, children's ones usually, yield egg shells. Animal bones and egg shells were unearthed in the Avar cemeteries as well (Балинт 1995, 48). Animal sacrifices (cattle, sheep, domestic birds, pigs) were placed (mainly on top of the feet and the lower leg bones of the deceased) in the burials between the Danube and the Tisza Rivers after the mid 7th century, and bones of domestic birds prevailed in the Late Avar period.[4] Bones of wild animals are extremely rare in both the inhumation burials along the Lower Danube (Станчев–Иванов 1958, 176) and the Avar ones (Дайм 2002, 305). Cremation burials in the Balchik cemetery yielded tiny shells.

None of the cremation and the inhumation burials in the Balchik cemetery yielded parts or complete skeletons of horses, a fact leading to the firm conclusion that these animals, which were sacred to the Bulgars, were not used for food. Similarly, the rest of the biritual cemeteries provide the same information. Single burials from the cemeteries at Novi Pazar, Kyulevcha and Nozharevo (Станчев–Иванов 1958, 166, обр. 3–8. Burial № 33; Въжарова 1976, 116, обр. 68, 69. 1. Burial № 55; Рашев–Станилов 1989, 218, обр. 5) are believed to be definite burials with horses. The horse skeletons were placed in a niche or at the level of the dead body in an enlargement at the western side of the grave pit. The limbs of the horses are flexed and the heads point to the south, in a direction opposite to the human head. A horse skin with the limbs, the tail and the head was placed at the feet in the southern part of a grave pit in the Kabiyuk cemetery (Рашев et al. 2006, 375). Perhaps in these cases the horses were killed together with their owners and for that reason were buried together. Or perhaps the ritual underwent a change after settling down on the new territories? It also seems possible that horses were killed only in special cases – when burying warriors or representatives of the elite. Much more burials with horses are yielded by the Avar cemeteries, where different variants are attested. Early Avar burials yielded horse scarecrows and sometimes complete horse skeletons; both burial rituals are attested in one and the same cemetery (Балинт 1995, 42; Дайм 2002, 306). The number of the burials yielding horse parts decreases in the Middle Avar period. If there is a horse skeleton in the burial, it is usually placed at the right side of the deceased, and the head is usually at the feet of the horseman (Балинт 1995, 44).

The grave structures of cremation burials yielded by single ritual cemeteries and cremation burials yielded by the biritual cemeteries in Bulgaria are identical – pits with burnt bones, pits with urns, chambers made from bricks or stones. Urn graves are the predominant type in Slavic single ritual cemeteries, while pit graves prevail in the biritual cemeteries. Chamber burials are found in both types of cemeteries. A typical feature of biritual cemeteries is the presence of ritual food, while animal bones are quite rarely found in single ritual cemeteries with cremation burials. Biritual cemeteries yield more numerous grave goods and there is a greater variety of ceramic vessels. All clay pots are thrown. There are urns (large jars), but usually the pottery in the burials consists of ritual vessels containing ritual food or drink – pattern burnished jars made from fine clay, jars, amphora-shaped pitchers, bowl and bucket-shaped beakers. Jars decorated with incised straight or wavy lines are discovered in Avar burials dated to the 6th–7th and 8th centuries (Vida 1999, Taf. 3–7, 10, 13, 17–21, 23, 33–37, 99–102, 115, 116, 121–123, 174; Дайм 2002, 302, 308, Taf. 33). Other shapes, including flasks, are attested in the Early and Middle Avar Periods (Vida 1999, Taf. 93–95, 166–172). Only one flask was found among the numerous ceramic vessels yielded by biritual cemeteries in Bulgaria. It is a stray find from the area of the Hitovo 2 cemetery before the start of the excavations.[5] It is worth mentioning that beakers shaped as deep conical bowls on a pedestal are known from Avar cemeteries. They are handmade and dated to ca. 700 AD (Vida 1999, 175, Taf. 90, 1–3). Such a large beaker-bowl

[4] I am very much indebted to Csilla Balogh for the provided information.

[5] *Прабългарите и техните съседи през V–X век*. Варна 2004, № 20.

with a hollow pedestal, which was, however, made on a slow potter's wheel, was unearthed in burial № 56 in the cemetery at Topola (Ангелова et al. 1999, таб. 5). The Avar cemeteries (Rosner 1999, Taf. 13. 182: 1, Taf. 22. 329:5, Taf. 29. 406:1, Taf. 57. 6, Taf. 58. 9) yielded beakers resembling the bucket-shaped beakers from Bulgaria (Зирра 1963, обр. 24. 7; Вăжарова 1976, 160, обр. 101. 5; Ангелова et al. 1997, таб. 1–3). Handmade ceramic vessels prevail in the Late Avar Period and represent 80% of the pottery. It was the time when new ceramic types appeared – turned ceramic jars decorated with wavy and straight lines (Балинт 1995, 46, таб. III. 28) as well as the so-called Yellow ware. However, Yellow ware is also found in the biritual cemeteries in Bulgaria – jars in Balchik (burial № 261), Novi Pazar (Станчев–Иванов 1958, 47–48. № 8. 50, № 18), Hitovo 2 (Йотов 1997, 157, № 5), burial mound XXXIII in Pliska (Дончева-Петкова 1977, 77, кат. № 247. таб. XVIII. 247). Yellow ware was manufactured in an unidentified production center in Pliska (layers yielding waste production have been excavated so far) – jugs, bowls, jars, large jars, amphorae, "*tea pots*" similar to the Avar ones (Dončeva-Petkova 2007a, 306–310, Fig. 19). This center has also produced luxurious vessels; such were found in the secret tunnel at Krum's palace (Рашев 2004, 68–100, обр. 10). Some of the ceramic vessels yielded by the cemeteries were copies of metal prototypes (*Fig. 8*). Their shapes are related to vessels from Malaya Pereshchepina, Kiskőrös-Vágóhíd, Ozora, Bócsa, Kunbábony, Vrap and Nagyszentmiklós hoards (Залеская et al. 2006, № 21, 24; Gschwantler 2002, № 2–7, 10, 19, 20; Garam 2002, Abb. 1, 8, 10, 13, 14).

Metal finds are not numerous, but they are found in all cemeteries and verify their dating. Small single-edged iron knives, similar to the ones yielded by Avar burials, are very common. Metal elements of wooden buckets have also been discovered in the cemeteries in present-day Bulgaria (Kyulevcha, Balchik, Topola, Devnya 1) and sickles in few cases. Three folded sickles were placed in burial № 18 – an urn-jar – in the Hitovo 3 cemetery (Йотов 1991, 101, таб. 3) and one more sickle was unearthed in Hitovo 2 cemetery (Йотов 1997, 156, Burial № 3). A highly corroded sickle was yielded by the rich burial № 3 discovered in the Divdyadovo living quarter in Shumen (Атанасов et al. 2007, 58–59, обр. 1. 1). These tools confirm the settled agricultural lifestyle of the Bulgars at that time. A burial of a 50–60 years old female from the Balchik cemetery yielded a pruning-knife. Sickles were also found in the Late Avar period (Балинт 1995, 46; Kiss 2001, Taf. 92. B-555: 11).

Weapons are extremely rare in biritual cemeteries in Bulgaria – arrow points (mainly trilobate) are known from cremation burials in Kyulevcha (Вăжарова 1976, 152, обр. 95. 2–3), Bdintsi (Вăжарова 1976, 148, 152, обр. 91. 4, 95. 2–3), Hitovo 3, (Йотов 1991, 101, таб. 2. 13) and burial № 202 in the Balchik cemetery. Only two burials yielded iron sabers – Novi Pazar (Станчев–Иванов 1958, 103, таб. XXVII. 1) and the Kabiyuk burial (Рашев et al. 2006, 374–375) and five burials yielded battle axes: Novi Pazar (Станчев–Иванов 1958, таб. XXXII), Kyulevcha (Вăжарова 1976, 122, обр. 73. 2), Divdyadovo (Атанасов et al. 2007, 59, обр. 1. 4), Nozharevo and Krassen (Йотов 2004, кат. 548–549. таб. XLVI.). Iron elements of a lance were found in Novi Pazar (Станчев–Иванов 1958, 98, Burial № 33. таб. XXXI. 1) and Divdyadovo (Атанасов et al. 2007, 59, обр. 1. 5); two spurs and a bridle-bit in Kyulevcha (Вăжарова 1976, 119, 133, обр. 70, 5, 82. 1–2). The limited number of finds reveals that because armour was expensive, it was kept by the living and was not placed in the burials, which also lack stirrups, in contrast to Avar burials. Two stirrups and a sword were uncovered in the vicinity of the village of Dobroplodno, Varna region (Йотов 2007, 125–126, обр. 1а–б). A sword dated to the late 7th–mid 8th century was found in the Rishki pass (Йотов 2006, кат. 420. таб. XXIX). Bone appliqués of reflex bows (Станчев–Иванов 1958, 104–105, обр. 29) are extremely rarely found in Bulgar burials (Станчев–Иванов 1958, 98, таб. XXXI. 2–6) in contrast to the Avar ones (Madaras 1994, Taf. LI–LVII; Török 1994, Taf. XX; Kiss 2001, Taf. 93. 1–10). The biritual cemeteries as well as the Avar burials yielded bone needle-cases (Григоров 2007, 87–97) and bone horns-amulets: Novi Pazar (Станчев–Иванов 1958, таб. XXXIII. 4), Kyulevcha (Вăжарова 1976, 105–106, обр. 594, 119; 69. 3) and Balchik (from a cremation burial and two inhumation burials). The biritual cemeteries also yield lamb knucklebones – small openings were made in some of them and others, found in cremation burials, were burnt. 30 knucklebones, more than half of them pierced, were unearthed at the right elbow of a 9–10 year-old child buried in the Balchik cemetery.

Personal belongings comprise mainly personal ornaments – earrings, iron quadrangular or rectangular belt buckles and iron fire strikers. Such artifacts were discovered in Avar cemeteries as well. Some of the belt buckles unearthed in the Balchik cemetery (almost all of them made from iron) are related to Byzantine pieces – the Corinth type, Yası Ada type having B-shaped or fixed cross-shaped plate – and date the earliest burials to the last decades of the 8th century (Дончева-Петкова

2007, 134–136, обр. 8. 2; Дончева-Петкова 2009 обр. 8. 1–3). This cemetery as well as Topola, Novi Pazar, Bdintsi and Devnya 3 yielded copper lamellae with hammered hemispheres, with small nails and rivets, belt buckles with rivets, folded lamellae with preserved parts from wooden vessels, similar to the ones found in monuments dated to the Second Avar Khaganate and on the Crimea, bronze belt buckles, and belt pendants resembling the ones from the Vrap-Erseke hoard (Дончева-Петкова 2009, обр. 8. 4). The early date of the cemeteries is confirmed by the small bells and the earrings with a twisted end, with a conical pendant, "*Pastirskoe*" types and with wired spheres (Даскалов 1999, 138–140). It is known that the "*Pastirskoe*" type of earrings is very common on the Lower Danube as well as in Pannonia, Serbia, Transylvania, South Slovakia and South Ukraine (Атанасов et al. 2007, 63–64, обр. 4).

Two copper bracelets with missing ends were yielded by burial № 149 (a cremation burial) of the Balchik cemetery. They are decorated with longitudinal channeling and incisions. Similar opened bracelets are published from the village of Karapelit, Dobrich region. The cited parallels come from the 8th century Avar cemetery at Pilismarót-Basaharc, Hungary and the biritual cemetery at Platonesţi, Ialamiţa county in Romania (Йотов 2007, 127, обр. 3. with ref.). Bracelets similar to the ones from the Balchik cemetery were found in the biritual cemetery at Sultana dated to the 8th century by B. Mitrea, although he assumes that the cemetery might have been in use from the late 7th century until the early 9th century (Mitrea 1988, 102, Pl. 10, T. 8). Bracelets with longitudinal channeling and a hinged clasp are attested in the 7th century monuments from the Avar Khaganate – golden bracelets from Kunbábony (H. Tóth–Horváth 1992, кат. № 25, 26), bronze bracelets from Keszthely, from Kaposvár or bracelets with rounded ends from the Late Avar cemetery at Ordas (H. Tóth–Horváth 1992, Note 895–898. Abb. 13. 83). The metal bracelets are also included in Zlata Čilinská's review on 7th–8th century female personal ornaments in the Carpathian Basin. She assigns similar flat bracelets with channeling and hinged clasp to type III (Čilinská 1975, 84, Abb. 8. 4).

The number of glass beads, usually yielded by children's burials, is also limited. Such artifacts were discovered only in several children's burials in the Balchik cemetery, and their number does not exceed 3–4 in a burial. They are similar in colour and shape to the beads from Avar cemeteries. The most typical are the water melon seed-shaped beads attested in the Middle Avar Period (Балинт 1995, 44) and in Novi Pazar (Станчев–Иванов 1958, 103, таб. XXV. 11), Kyulevcha (Въжарова 1976, 139, обр. 86. 1а–д), Topola (burials № 163, 173) and the Divdyadovo burial (Атанасов et al. 2007, 64) in Bulgaria.

It is rather a matter of Avar cultural influence on the Lower Danube in the late 7th and the 8th centuries. The information provided by the Suda that the Bulgars liked the costume of the Avars is believed to be related to the metal elements of the belt-set. However, at the present level of research, it is difficult to define whether the Avar belt-set was the only one to influence the Bulgar one, since "*belt fashions similar in decorative motifs but quite differing in some of the popular subjects as well as manufacturing techniques*" (Тотев 2004, 18) developed in both countries in the first half of the 8th century. The origin and the ethno-cultural affiliation of the Vrap-Erseke belt-sets were discussed many times in archaeological publications. The similar style of the belt-sets from Velino, Kamenovo and Zlatari with the ones from Kabiyuk, Divdyadovo and Gledachevo reveals that "*the Avar fashion*" of the "*griffins-vine sprouts*" belt style was popular in the Bulgar Kingdom in the pagan period. Based on the decorative motifs and the manufacturing of the belt mountings from silver as well as from copper alloy, Bulgarian archaeologists suggest that there was a well developed local production in the first decades of the 8th century. An opinion was also expressed that the "*griffins-vine sprouts*" style in the Bulgar culture "*was introduced from Macedonia (from Kuber's court) and not from the Avar territories on the Middle Danube*" (Станилов 2006, 258). This style operates with a limited number of decorative motifs and lacks the variety displayed by the numerous cast Avar belt-sets (Станилов 2006, 312).

Among the early medieval artifacts in Bulgaria, there is a considerable number of Avar belt mountings, small strap-ends mainly designed for side straps, dated to the late 8th–early 9th centuries. They prove a direct Avar influence – it is assumed that these were either military trophies or were brought by Avars who migrated to the territories of present-day Bulgaria (Станилов 2006, 260). However, there is also another possible option "*development of fashion in the metalwork in the Bulgar Kingdom similar to the one on the Middle Danube*" evidenced by lead models, belt-buckle and strap-end wastes, etc. (Плетньов 2009, 113–114).

Biritual cemeteries in Bulgaria yielded greater number and a greater variety of ceramic vessels compared to the Avar cemeteries yielding mainly jars and a smaller number of beakers, bowls and amphora-shaped vessels (Балинт 1995, 46). While 80% of the Late Avar pottery found in settlements is handmade, the ceramic vessels from settlements and

cemeteries in Bulgaria are made on a slow potter's wheel. However, the pagan cemeteries in Bulgaria yielded a lower number of personal adornments as well as artifacts related to armour and horse equipment in comparison to the Avar cemeteries.

No rich burials have been discovered in the biritual cemeteries in Bulgaria excavated until present. Furthermore, the grave goods reveal a certain degree of equality. Some of the cremation burials yielded a higher number of artifacts – personal belongings and grave goods. The Balchik cemetery provided the highest number of burials yielding complete animal skeletons or parts of them, and 15 of them, as it has already been mentioned, yielded large animals – oxen, cows and calves, which are expensive grave goods and speak of the wealth of the deceased.

In 2005 a burial of a 20–22 years old male, a representative of the Bulgar aristocracy, was discovered under one of the four mounds within the earthen fortification at Kabiyuk. The rich grave goods – 51 artifacts made from iron, bronze, silver and gold, as well as a horse and a saber indicate the high social status of the deceased (Рашев et al. 2006, 374–375; Рашев 2008, 202, обр. 75). Some of the artifacts have parallels with artifacts from the Vrap– Erkese group. Rich burials were also uncovered not far away from Kabiyuk, in the southern and the northern part of Divdyadovo living quarter in the town of Shumen. The male in burial № 3 in the northern part of Divdyadovo living quarter also had a high social status. The burial yielded a battle axe, a knife-dagger, a sickle, a metal hoop of a bucket, amphora-shaped pitcher; two belt-sets, silver and copper ones, consisting of two belt buckles, 13 belt mountings, a strap-end and a loop (Атанасов et al. 2007, 57–66). These personal ornaments and burials are dated to the first decades of the 8th century. For the time being these burials are defined as single, and it seems that they are not associated with any cemeteries. No biritual cemeteries were found to the south of the Balkan as it is expected with view to the initial boundaries of the Bulgar Kingdom. In 1981 Zhivka Vazharova published a gilded bronze belt buckle and a part of a hinged appliqué discovered at the village of Zlatari, Yambol region (Въжарова 1981, 53–54, обр. 24) and the excavations in the summer of 2005 at a pit sanctuary near the village of Gledachevo, Stara Zagora region brought to light a multiple pagan burial with 4 skeletons – of a 20 year-old man and 3 children – 14, 8 and 6–7 years old. The burial yielded rich silver belt-sets associated with the Vrap-Erseke group, golden buttons and pendants with parallels in the Pereshchepina and Yasinovo hoards in Ukraine (Тонкова–Георгиева 2006, 165–166). Archaeologists date these representative finds to the late 7th–early 8th century. It can be assumed that the personal adornments discovered at Zlatari and Gledachevo date to the reign of Khan Tervel, when the region called Zagore was annexed to the Bulgar Kingdom. Moreover, Zlatari is situated only 21 km to the northeast of Gledachevo. Two Bulgar burials were discovered in Plovdiv in the summer of 2008.[6]

It has to be mentioned that no pagan cemeteries have been discovered in Pliska. Therefore, it can be said that Uwe Fiedler had good reasons to call Pliska "*a capital city without burials*". However, a number of biritual cemeteries encircle the first Bulgarian capital city. Deeply hidden and unknown are the burials of the Bulgar khans. Maybe the burials of Khan Tervel (700–721), who received generous gifts from the Byzantine emperor, the fearsome Khan Krum (803–814) and the khan-builder Omurtag (814–831) will be uncovered in the future.

Some of the cemeteries functioned until the 860s when the Bulgars were converted to Christianity in 864. Few Christian burials were excavated in Topola, Karamanite, Hitovo and Devnya 3 cemeteries, and after that these burial places ceased to be in use.

In many Bulgarian, Romanian and Hungarian publications the question is raised about the northeastern Bulgar boundary set during the reigns of Krum and Omurtag and located at the Tisza River and the Carpathians, about the Bulgar presence there, established in the 9th–early 10th centuries and marked by various monuments and artifacts – an earthen fortification, settlements, cemeteries and gray burnished ware. These monuments were found in South and Southeast Transylvania, the most remarkable ones being located in Alba Iulia and Blandiana (Comşa 1960, 395–422; Comşa 1963, 413–438; Hordet 1966, 261–289; Madgearu 2001, 271–283; Madgearu 2005, 41–65; Ţiplic 2005, 133–156; Ţiplic 2006, 43, 54, 65, 75).

Bulgarian archaeologists are still not able to find answers for a number of questions. Further details of the sequence of the Slavic and Bulgar monuments need to be clarified. One of the most important questions is the relation between Slavs and Bulgars and the way the material culture reflected the everyday life of the two ethnic groups. The excavated settlements dated from the 8th–9th until the 10th century yielded artifacts of both Slavic and Bulgar traditions. As it has already been mentioned, some influence is attested in

[6] See the article written by Ivo Topalilov and Kamen Stanev in this volume.

the pottery discovered in the cemeteries – Bulgar pottery is found in Slavic cemeteries with cremation burials and vice versa – Slavic pottery is yielded by biritual cemeteries. Further study is needed on the questions concerning the cremation burials in chambers both in the single ritual and biritual cemeteries and the ritual of placing whole animals or parts of them in the grave pits. Recently, it has been suggested to explore possible connection with stone chambers in the Kubano-Black Sea area (Клисуранов–Коматарова-Балинова 2009, 175–176).

A number of authors believe that the biritual cemeteries belonged to Slavs and Bulgars. An opinion has been expressed that the urn burials in these cemeteries belong to Slavs (Fiedler 1992, 362). It is assumed that the biritualism is related to ideological differences rather than ethnic ones (Аксенова 2007, 223–224), a statement which is not devoid of foundations, in view of the fact that other ethnic groups have used both rituals from ancient times until present as well. However, recent studies, especially at the Balchik cemetery, almost tipped the balance in favour of the Bulgars (Дончева-Петкова 2009, 85).

The decades after the conversion to Christianity and the introduction of the Slavic alphabet in the second half of the 9th century gradually erased the ethnic differences. In this period the pagan cemeteries stopped functioning and new cemeteries were established quite nearer to the settlements, even inside them, at the church buildings.

The questions about the chronology and the ethnogenesis of the monuments associated with the material and the spiritual culture of Avars and Bulgars are extremely interesting and in spite of the efforts of many scholars (especially the Hungarian colleagues and their studies on Avar metalwork) still need further researching. This can be achieved by joint work – by scrutinizing the available finds, setting the problem and looking for parallels. This will allow defining more accurately the similarities and the differences not only in burial ritual and grave goods but with regard to various objects from everyday and military life, as well as metalwork. Similarities could be explained by common cultural traditions evolving from the past – from the South Russian steppes or Iran, the Byzantine Empire and the Mediterranean or by coincidences which are due to the period when the culture of the pagan period of the First Bulgarian Kingdom and the one of the Avar Khaganate had developed. Physical anthropologists will have to join in too, putting to use their new methods of study. This way the recent, and undoubtedly the future, discoveries will probably provide answers to a number of questions raised many years ago by our predecessors Géza Fehér and Nikola Mavrodinov.

Translated by Tatiana Stefanova

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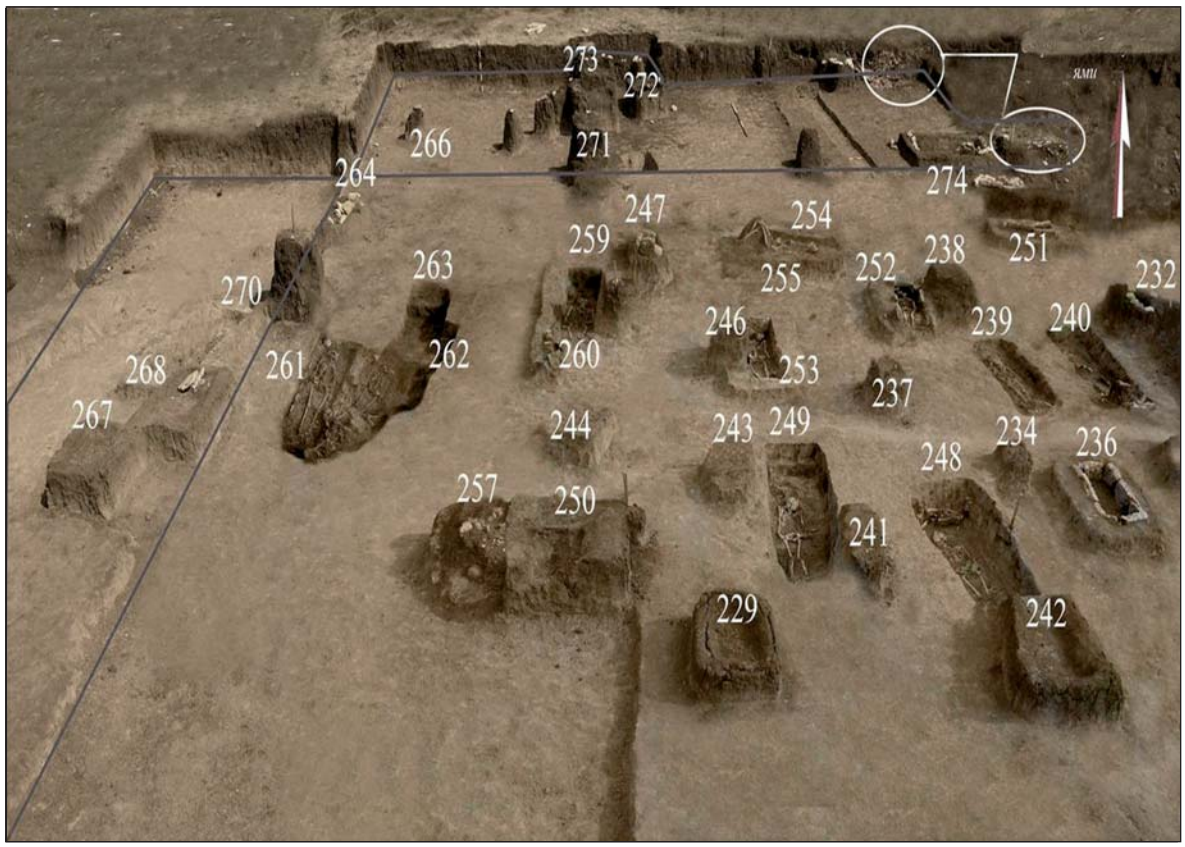

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Fig. 4: 1: The biritual cemetery at the town of Balchik – part of the graves (2007 and 2008 seasons); 2: Two connected burials – Grave 212 (35–40 year-old male) and Grave 213 (18–20 year-old male) with various orientations

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Fig. 5: 1–2: Cremation burials in pits in the Balchik cemetery: 1: Grave 282; 2: Grave 250. 3–4: Cremation burials in chambers in the Balchik cemetery. 3: Graves 277 and 278; 4: Graves 226. 5–6: Inhumation burials in pits in the Balchik cemetery 5: Grave 222; 6: Grave 217

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Fig. 6: Burials in the Balchik cemetery. 1: Grave 253 – the short sides of the grave pit are lined with stones; 2–3: Grave 251 – lines and covered with stones

Fig. 7: Yellow ware from Bulgaria. 1: Mound XXXIII in Pliska; 2–4: The secret tunnel at Krum's palace in Pliska; 5: The Big cistern; 6: The cemetery at Novi Pazar

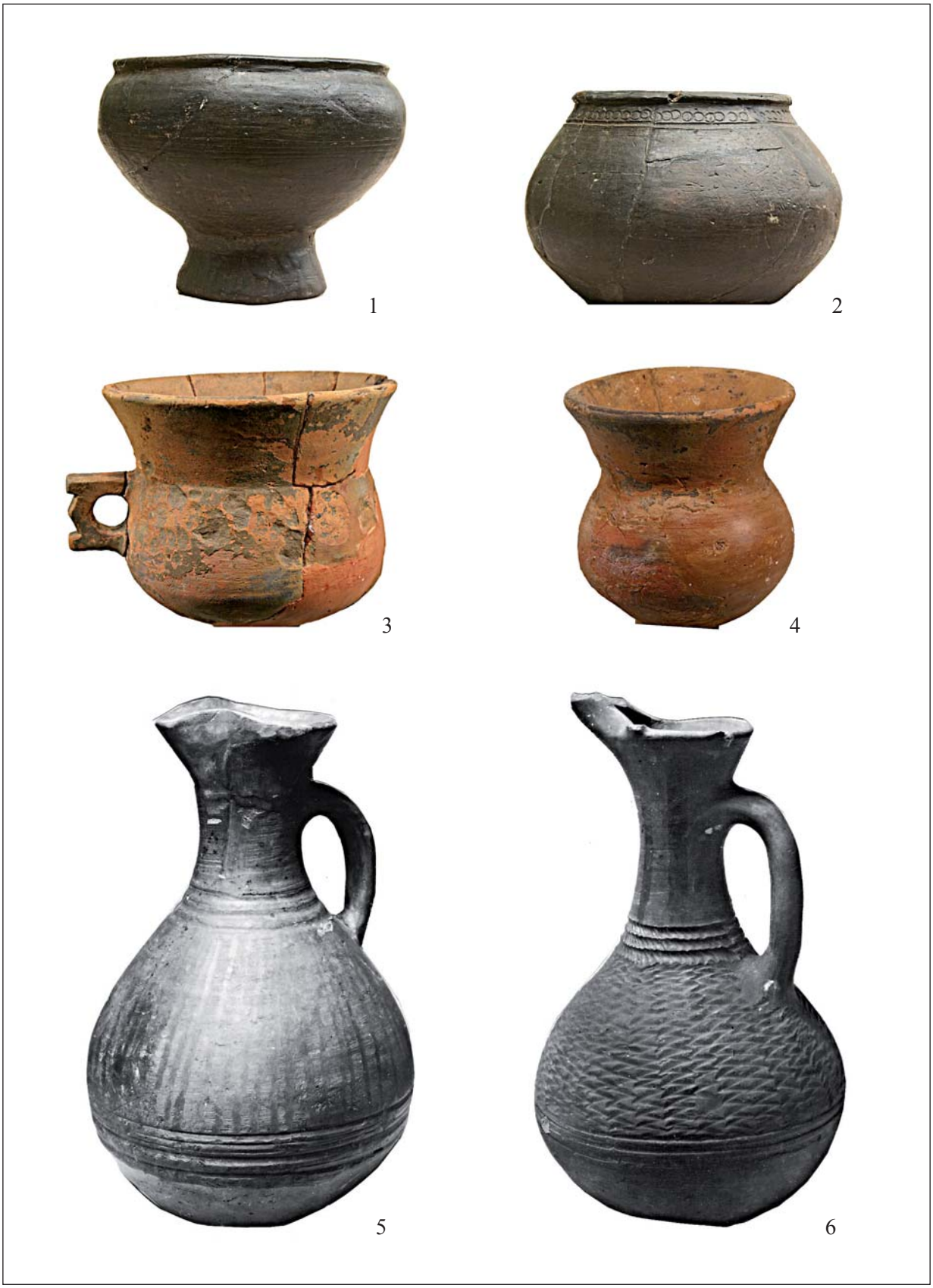

Fig. 8: Ceramic vessels yielded by the cemeteries, imitating metal shapes.
1–4: Topola; 5–6: Novi Pazar

MASQUE TYPE MOUNTS FROM THE CARPATHIAN BASIN[1]

Csilla BALOGH

In the archaeological record of the early medieval Carpathian Basin, there is a relatively small group of cast and ajouré mounts (and their pressed imitations) with a characteristic geometric decoration recalling human faces, which are therefore generally referred to as „*masque type mounts*".[2]

The scarcity of masque type mounts in the Carpathian Basin can be illustrated by the following facts: their catalogue contains only 36 findplaces and 45 find contexts altogether.[3]

I suggest two criteria for their classification: the first one is based on technological, the other on formal characteristics. In the Carpathian Basin masque type mounts often occur sporadically, at any case there are no complete sets surviving and they were most probably used differently from their counterparts in the Russian steppe. The functional aspect has therefore been neglected in the classification.

THE TYPOLOGY OF THE MASQUE TYPE MOUNTS

Regarding their manufacturing techniques, the masque type mounts of the Carpathian Basin can be divided into three groups: Group no. 1 contains cast, Group no. 2 cut-out and Group no. 3. pressed pieces.

1. CAST MOUNTS

The mounts are made of silver, sometimes bronze, their thickness lies between 1–1.5 mm. Through the so-called skin-casting technique they acquired a rim. Their front is polished, the rear side is crude. They are usually smaller than their pressed imitations or the pressed mounts of similar form.

There are several variants regarding the application used on them: most of them were fastened with a small rivet cast together with the mount, but to the south of the river Körös there are rectangular loops cast with the mount (Szentes-Nagyhegy, Grave 29 [*Fig. 2. 1*]) and rounded ones soldered afterwards (Klárafalva B, Grave 60 [*Fig. 3. 3*]) as well.

Generally speaking, they are decorated ajouré, often enriched with chiseling. The ajouré decoration can be divided in two major groups: most of them consist of simple geometric motifs (circles, triangles, rectangles in different combinations); to the south of the river Körös there are more complex and differentiated ones. The pieces found at Kecel and Potzneusiedl have unique faces, rendered with chiseling.

There are only a few formal varieties of the cast, ajouré mounts of the masque type known from the south Russian steppe which are present in the Carpathian Basin as well: their contours are either straight and parallel to each other (*Figs. 2. 4–11*), or curving (*Fig. 2. 3*), and there are some belt-ends with irregularly curving contours (*Fig. 2. 1*); there are simple pelta-shaped (*Fig. 3. 1*), double pelta (*Figs. 3. 3–4*) and triple pelta-shaped ones

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1 This paper is the abbreviated and slightly adjusted version of my "Martinovka-típusú övgarnitúra Kecelről. A Kárpát-medencei maszkos veretek tipokronológiája. – Gürtelgarnitur des Typs Martinovka von Kecel. Die Typochronologie der Maskenbeschläge des Karpatenbeckens" (BALOGH 2004). In the text there are no bibliographic references to the findplaces, only to the typological charts. References are included in the catalogue.

2 They are not to be confused with the mounts of Byzantine origin, featuring human faces rendered with a dotted line. The masque type mounts belong to the larger group of the "Martynovka type". In the hoard discovered at Martynovka there are basically three styles and there is no general agreement among Hungarian archaeologists in the usage of the termini Martynovka group, Martynovka culture and Martynovka type. Sometimes it designates objects with a similar kind of decoration; others use it to denote formal analogies or similar manufacturing techniques. Russian archaeologists use the term "heraldic mounts" (геральдические накладки) for the masque type (ГАВРИТУХИН–ОБЛОМСКИЙ 1996, 72). For a detailed discussion of the history of research see BALOGH 2004, 247–248.

3 The publication of the first 1500 graves of the cemetery at Zamárdi-Rétiföldek appeared only after the completion of this manuscript. I can only note that there were eight graves (No. 559; 925; 1013; 1020; 1072; 1091; 1298 and 1323) containing masque type mounts (BÁRDOS–GARAM 2009).

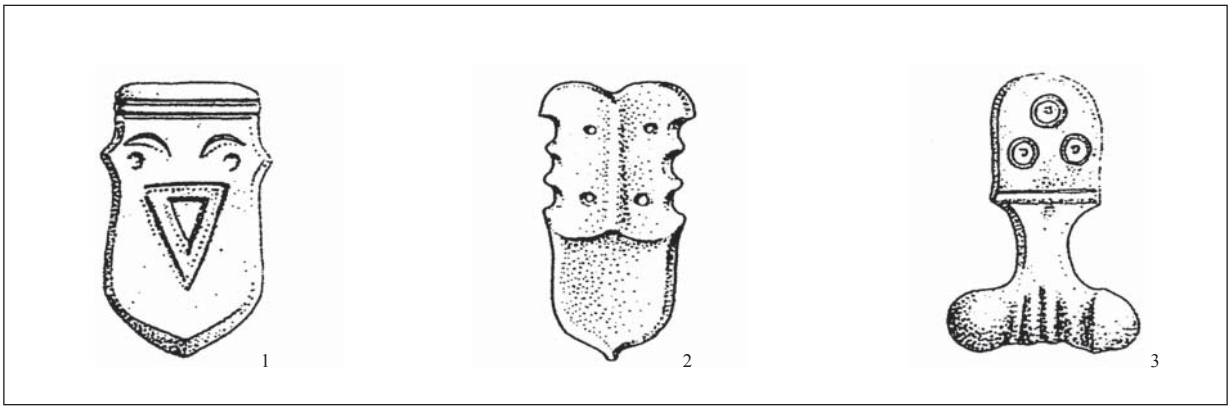

Fig. 1: Press moulds. 1, 3: Adony; 2: Gátér, Grave 11

(*Figs. 3. 5–6*); fish-tail (*Fig. 3. 2*); rectangular with pelta-shape (*Fig. 2. 2*); T-shaped (*Figs. 3. 9–10*) and elongated clinging mounts (*Figs. 3. 7–8, 11–13*).

Cast masque type mounts are most probably belt-mounts, one triple-pelta from Hajdúszoboszló being the only exception.[4] The Avar graves in the Carpathian Basin generally contain only one of them, and even in the most extreme case there were only four in the same grave. It is therefore to be assumed, that they were not used in the same fashion, as in their home on the steppe. The most complete set was found at Kecel, where the grave contained 11 mounts altogether. Only one of them belonged to the masque type (T-shaped clinging mount) the others were simple undecorated mounts. At Szabadka, the masque type mount was accompanied by a small and a large belt-end made of simple sheet-bronze. At Klárafalva B (Grave 60) both the small belt ends (with curving contour) and the large belt-ends of the belt set were cut out of bronze sheet. The ajouré decoration of the latter is identical with the cast masque type mounts.

The available evidence strongly suggests that cast, ajouré masque type mounts always occur on belts with pendant stripes: the belt from Klárafalva and the belt sets with cast ajouré masque type clinging mounts had multiple pendant stripes, while the graves at Kecel, Szentes-Lapistó, Tolnanémedi and Subotica contained only one small belt mount each.

In the Carpathian Basin there are 18 findplaces from the Avar period where cast masque type mounts have been found: four pieces are stray-finds, the rest comes from graves (or at least most probably from graves). Most of the find-places are located in the core area of the Avars: they are evenly scattered between the Tisza and the Danube, a few of them lying on the left bank of the Tisza and on the right of the Danube. Three were unearthed far from the bulk, but close to each other, to the north of Lake Fertő (Neusiedler See), on the plain of Parndorf (Bruckneudorf, Leobersorf, Potzneusiedl), and one single piece has been found to the south of the river Tisza (Manđjelos) (*Fig. 7. 1*).

2. CUT-OUT MOUNTS

This group comprises only belt-ends.[5] They are cut out of bronze or silver sheets, the one from Magyarcsanád is, as far as I know, the only piece made of lead. The majority is made of two sheets with sidesticks (*Figs. 4. 1–6*), but the rimmed piece from Sonta belongs equally to this group, although it is made of one sheet only (*Fig. 4. 7*).

Regarding their application, the mounts belonging to this group are uniform, since all of them were fastened with one or two bronze rivets hammered through them.

Their decoration consists of geometrical and/or curving patterns and the combination of these. These are sometimes enriched with incised or chiseled lines. It is absolutely clear, that this decoration is derived from the cast masque type mounts, and adapts the same motifs to another technique.

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[4] A masque type elongated clinging mount was found in the horse grave of Zamárdi-Rétiföldek 559 (BÁRDOS–GARAM 2009, Taf. 72. 13). Mounts of this type were usually made of bronze, yet their design is rougher than other masque type mounts: they are positively not produced with skin-casting technique. These mounts have been found so far only among belt-mounts (cf. BALOGH 2004, 253–254), yet the Zamárdi find was applied as a harness mount.

[5] The belt-end found at the right scapula of an aged woman in Grave 165 at Szegvár-Oromdűlő might have been of secondary use, perhaps intertwined with pearls (LŐRINCZY 1998, Fig. 15. 11).

This group of masque type mounts is typical for the Carpathian Basin, but even in this area, there are only seven find-places known. Four of them are to the east of the Tisza and to the south of the Körös (Klárafalva B, Grave 60; Magyarcsanád-Bökény D; Mokrin/Homokrév-Vodoplav, Grave 67 and Szegvár-Oromdűlő, Grave 165), two are lying to the north of Lake Balaton (Keszthely-Bazilika, Grave 3 and Környe, Grave 78), and one is situated between the Danube and the Tisza (Sonta/Szond) (*Fig. 7. 2*).

3. Pressed mounts

These mounts are produced by embossing or squeezing either from bronze or less frequently from silver sheets of inferior quality. They are characteristic of the 7th century Carpathian Basin, and can be regarded as a local idiosyncrasy. The mounts are usually rimmed, and their rear side is usually filled with lead. The cramp-like loops were pressed into the lead and fastened with small stripes or rectangular sheets from the rear. There are two exemptions to this rule, which are made up of two sheets, the one on the front being embossed and decorated, the rear one is plain and cut out from a sheet.

These pressed masque type mounts can be regarded without any doubt as imitations of their cast counterparts. This is borne out both by their form and decoration. There are many formal varieties within the group: simple pelta-shaped (*Figs. 6. 1–4*), symmetrical double-pelta (*Figs. 6. 10–11*), fishtail (*Figs. 6. 5–9*), B-shape and double lunulae-shaped (*Figs. 6. 12–13*) mounts and belt-ends with straight (*Figs. 5. 1–6; 8–15*) and curving contours (*Fig. 5. 7*) equally belong to this group.

At Keszthely-Fenéki út, Grave 8 (*Fig. 5. 4*) and at Jánoshida-Tótkérpuszta, Grave 67 (*Fig. 5. 7*) there were absolutely no mounts in addition to the masque type pieces. The other pressed mounts of the masque type belonged to belt-sets comprising most often plain, round or pressed rosetta-like mounts, in some cases pressed pseudo-buckles. Sometimes they occur as mounts decorating the footwear or on horse harness.

In the Carpathian Basin we have only Környe, Grave 151, where the double lunulae (*Fig. 6. 13*)[6] and fishtail mounts were used on belts without pendant stripes.[7] On the other hand, all the other varieties of the pressed masque type mounts were used on belts with pendant stripes.

The pressed masque type mounts were most probably locally produced, as it is indicated by the moulds found in the graves of two Avar goldsmiths at Adony and Gátér (*Fig. 1*).[8]

There are twenty Avar graves from sixteen findplaces in the Carpathian Basin containing pressed masque type mounts. Only one of these is a stray find from the vicinity of Szeged (*Fig. 6. 9*), but even this one is likely to have come from a grave (cf. Balogh 2004, 269). The majority of the findplaces known at present lies definitely to the south of the river Maros and in the eastern part of Transdanubia (*Fig. 7. 3*).[9]

The chronology of masque type mounts

The chronology of the Lapistó grave find and of the cast masque type mounts were soon correctly determined by D. Csallány, though he did not indicate the reasons and relied almost exclusively on his instincts. He dated the former to the late 6th or early 7th century, the latter to the second half of the 6th century, and he also assumed that the production of mounts may have started as early as the first half of the 6th century (Csallány 1934, 142, 212). Virtually the same conclusion has been reached by Cs. Bálint as well, though he did not make a reference to the results of D. Csallány (Bálint 1978, 196). É. Garam and I. Erdélyi (proceeding from different principles) dated the mounts to a later period, though the typology of A. K. Ambroz had an obvious influence on both of them. Erdélyi dated the majority of the cast items to the 7th century, and some of the Bashkirian items to the 8th century (Erdélyi 1982, 124–136).

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6 B-shaped and double lunulae shaped masque type mounts were found in Zamárdi horse Grave 1091 (Bárdos–Garam 2009, Taf. 123. 4–6). These mounts have appeared so far as harness decorations, in a function not known among the available finds in the Carpathian Basin.

7 In the light of Zamárdi Graves 1020, 1072 and 1323, this conclusion still seems to be correct. Cf. Bárdos–Garam 2009, Taf. 116, 121, 149!

8 Moulded silver mounts very similar to the mould with composite fishtail jointed with a flange in the middle from Gátér, Grave 11 are known from Zamárdi, Grave 1020 (Bárdos–Garam 2009, Taf. 116. 6–8).

9 This image is significantly modified by the abovementioned cemetery of Zamárdi. Taking also these graves into consideration, we have evidence for moulded masque type mounts from 26 graves in 17 sites (cf. n. 3.). The Zamárdi site excels in the number of data, too.

In her work published in 1976, É. Garam examined masque type mounts only superficially, and though she did not formulate it clearly, her comparative materials imply that she dated the masque type mounts to the last third of the 7th century (GARAM 1976, 136–138).

On the basis of east European finds P. Somogyi determined the chronology of the 3 typological groups (cast, sheet-bronze, pressed) of the masque type mounts in the Carpathian Basin (SOMOGYI 1987, 130–148). He relied on the following principles for establishing the chronology: 1. D. Csallány and N. Fettich already suggested that pressed masque type mounts are imitations of cast items implying that pressed items succeeded cast ones chronologically. 2. Since the few cast items were not produced in the Carpathian Basin but arrived here through trade, by looting, or by migration, they are contemporary with the parallel items from the East European steppe. He dated cast ajouré items to the second half of the 6th century, whereas pressed masque type items were dated to the early 7th century (SOMOGYI 1987, 147).

In my present study I approached the chronological problems of masque type mounts from the context in which they were found and thus attempted to establish a chronological order for the different types.

Hungarian researchers have always referred to two Gepidic burials as the earliest occurrence of masque type mounts in the Carpathian Basin. These are Grave D at Magyarcsanád-Bökény (*Fig. 4. 1*) and Grave 29 at Szentes-Nagyhegy (*Fig. 2. 1*). They were dated to the middle or the second half of the 6th century (CSALLÁNY 1961, 322–323; CSALLÁNY 1962, 68), the second one was even dated by D. Csallány to 580–590 (CSALLÁNY 1934, 214), i.e. immediately after the arrival of the Avars in the Carpathian Basin.

It has, however, escaped the attention of research, that in addition to these pieces there are two other masque type mounts found in Langobard graves in the region of Keszthely: Keszthely-Bazilika, Grave 3 (*Fig. 4. 6*) and Keszthely-Fenéki út, Grave 8. (*Fig. 5. 4*). These pieces should not be neglected and can offer new clues for dating. It is a remarkable fact as well, that all the four early masque type mounts belong to different groups, and there is only one of them (from Szentes), which is cast.

The belt-end with side-stick found at Magyarcsanád-Bökény, which is cut out of lead, cannot belong to the Gepidic Grave D and it is therefore not certain, that the mount would come from a Gepidic context. There are good parallels for it in late antique (non-nomadic) burials, such as Suuk-Su, Grave 54 (Айбабин 1990, рис. 49. 22), Grave 3 in the cemetery of Cibilium (BÁLINT 1995, Fig. 38. 8) and in Graves 132 and 134 at Callatis (PREDA 1980, 95, T. XXXIV. 1–3, 96. T. XXXIV. 1–4). If we are looking for parallels among the mounts in the Carpathian Basin, one finds the silver *ajouré* belt-end from the Langobard Grave 3 at Keszthely-Bazilika and the similar belt-end from the Avar Grave 165 at Szegvár-Oromdűlő, which are very close to it on a formal level. This last piece has a somewhat different decoration, compared with the other masque type mounts of the Carpathian Basin, and finds the best parallels in the Langobard graves of the cemetery at Nocera Umbra in North Italy.

The deceased person in the burials at Keszthely and Szegvár was in both cases a female and each grave contained besides the masque type belt-end only one buckle (with pelta-shaped body and a rectangular loop) which indicated the presence of a belt. The eastern belt-end of this type occurred exclusively in male burials. The specimens from Magyarcsanád and Keszthely are particularly instructive, considering their parallels as well. They seem to be different (structurally and regarding their decoration) from the other masque type mounts of the Carpathian Basin and have apparently no formal or functional connections either with the Avars, or with the nomadic finds of the steppe, and their decoration is different as well. In sum, they seem to appear in a Germanic context in the Carpathian Basin. The piece found at Szegvár presents a more complicated case. Here the grave has features, which are typical for 6th century nomadic burials (east-west orientation, partial animal deposition, separation of the human and animal parts), but the vessel found in the grave belongs to the sphere of Gepidic metalworking (LŐRINCZY 1998, 351, Fig. 15. 7).

Considering the pieces from Suuk-su and Callatis, it is highly probable that this elongated type of belt-end, which can be regarded as the prototype of the pieces in the Carpathian Basin, is a variant of masque type mounts that had developed in the Crimea or in the region along the Lower Danube, imitating the masque type mounts of the Northern Caucasus. They were transmitted from here to Italy as well, where they appear in Langobard graves (Nocera Umbra, Castel Trosino). Their sporadic occurrence in the Carpathian Basin suggests that they arrived here by trade.

In Grave 29 at Szentes-Nagyhegy there was only a Sučidava type buckle beside the cast, *ajouré* belt-end. The buckle type has been connected by D. Csallány genealogically and chronologically with the masque type mounts (CSALLÁNY 1962). Another buckle, completely identical with the one from Szentes was equally accompanied solely by a

cast, *ajouré* masque type belt-end from a grave at Piatra Frecăţei (Aurelian 1962, рис. 11b). The best parallels for the masque type mount from Nagyhegy are known from Verchnaya Eshera (Воронов–Бгажба 1979, 69, рис. 6–8), Prahovo and Sardis (Гавритухин–Обломский 1996, рис. 43, 45, 47).

The belt-end from Szentes is technically (it has no rim), formally and, most distinctively, structurally (i.e. regarding its application) different from the other masque type mounts in the Carpathian Basin. The rectangular loops placed at a right angle to the main axis of the mount and cast together with it, and the highly differentiated form of the belt-end is not found among Avar or other nomadic finds. Its Byzantine origin is therefore highly probable. The *ajouré* masque type mount of Grave 29 is not the single piece in the cemetery, which reveals the commercial contacts of this Gepidic group with the Byzantine Empire.[10]

The mount of unknown provenance belonging to the complex cast mounts with a rectangular upper part, has arrived from somewhere in southern Hungary to the collection of the National Museum (*Fig. 2. 2*) and has formal analogies, e.g. Suuk-Su, Grave 54 (Айбабин 1990, рис. 49. 2, 4, 6, 14), Sadovets (Welkow 1935, Abb. 2. 8), Vilhovchik (Приходнюк 1980, рис. 61. 11–12) and Piatra Frecăţej (Aurelian 1962, рис. 13. 7–8), which suggest that it does not reflect nomadic taste.

The earliest masque type mounts of the Carpathian Basin are those cut-out sheets from Grave 3 at Keszthely-Bazilika, from Magyarcsanád-Bökény and from Szegvár-Oromdűlő, Grave 165, and the cast *ajouré* ones from Szentes-Nagyhegy and from Southern Hungary. Their appearance in the Carpathian Basin cannot be connected with the arrival of the Avars; they are of Byzantine origin (both in their form and regarding their application) and arrived here by trade. They can be regarded contemporary with their eastern parallels and can thus be dated to the middle third of the 6th century. Their context does not provide any more information (the one from Magyarcsanád and the other in the National Museum are stray finds, the grave in Keszthely had been heavily disturbed), but do not contradict this dating either. The early date is supported by the Sučidava type buckle accompanying the mount at Szentes-Nagyhegy, because these buckles appear in the Carpathian Basin from the middle third of the 6th century onwards (Nagy 1993, 76).

The cast pieces from the graves at Szentes-Lapistó (*Fig. 3. 4*) and Klárafalva (*Fig. 3. 3*) belong to the earliest group of masque type mounts in the Carpathian Basin as well. The grave at Szentes was dated by Csallány, based on the analogies from Sinov'evka and other south russian findplaces, to the late 6th and the early 7th century (Csallány 1934, 210). The determination of the date of the goldsmith's grave at Klárafalva is not easy on the basis of the grave finds alone. The scales and weights usually found in such graves date them quite certainly to the first half of the Avar Period. These finds are missing at Klárafalva, so it is only the cast, ajouré, multiple pelta-shaped mounts and the burial rites, which might furnish a date. The belt mounts have few analogies (Suuk-Su, Piatra Frecăţej, Sardis etc.) which are typical for the non-nomadic burials of the second half of the 6th century. The burial rites, on the other hand (single grave dug into a tumulus, NW–SE orientation, partial animal deposition), are clearly nomadic features and apart from the orientation it is basically similar to the graves at Szentes-Lapistó and Szentes-Derekegyháza. P. Somogyi has concluded after the analysis of the nomadic burial rites of the 6th century that the parallel presence of cast masque type mounts and partial animal depositions is characteristic for the East European finds (Somogyi 1987, 146).

The dating of the few cast masque type mounts of the Carpathian Basin to the second half of the 6th century is confirmed by the triple pelta-shaped mounts of Hajdúszoboszló (*Figs. 3. 5–6*). This type of mount was fashionable according to their accepted chronology in the Caucasus and Bashkiria in the second half of the 6th and the first quarter of the 7th century. In East Georgia they are dated a little later, in the first half of the 7th century (Ковалевская 1972, 115). Although the find circumstances of the mounts found at Hajdúszoboszló are unknown, they were associated with an oval medallion, which is dated to the first phase of the Early Avar Period, i.e. to the third quarter of the 6th century (Lőrinczy 1991, 136).

The *ajouré*, cast fishtail-mount from Manđjelos (*Fig. 3. 2*) is a stray find. Ambroz has placed the similar pieces in his typochronological table to

[10] On the south bank of the Veker, at Szentes-Nagyhegy, G. Csallány excavated from 1930 to 1941 a Sarmatian, Gepidic and Avar cemetery. The Gepidic cemetery, consisting of 79 graves and several stray finds, was in use during the second third of the 6th century (Nagy 1993, 97). The finds reveal the widespread contacts of the buried people (from Skandinavia to the Pontic cities), which point among others to Byzantium. Commercial contacts are indicated by late antique imperial goods, such as the golden beads of Grave 84 (Csallány 1961, Taf. CCIV. 4–7). The most common finds arriving from Byzantium are the objects decorated with crosses, indicating the spread of Arianic Christianity, e. g. the rectangular reliquary box from Grave 84, decorated by punched crosses on both sides (Csallány 1961, Taf. XXXIX. 4).

the first half of the 7th century (Ambroz 1973, рис. 1). It is well known that the typochronology of Ambroz is late, i.e. he dates most of the types too late, and apparently this is true for these mounts as well. The earliest occurrence of this type is known from Grave 34 at Chufut-Kale, which is dated by the solidus of Justinian I to the middle of the 6th century (Кропоткин 1958, 214).[11] Regarding the date of the grave and of the mount at Manđjelos, the ring-hilted sword with a triple-looped suspension plate can be of help. This piece is the only one so far from the Carpathian Basin, where the loop and the handle are cast together (Simon 1991, 266) and it is immediately connected with the swords of the Far East having no transverse guard and dating from the 4th–6th centuries, because its handle is similar in form and material to them. This connection points not only to the origin of this type of sword, but is relevant for chronology as well. We can thus connect the sword from Manđjelos to the very first generation of Avars in the Carpathian Basin (Simon 1991, 273). A similar, straight and single-edged sword with loop-end and transverse guard was placed in Grave 13 at Deszk L (Balogh 2004, Note 2. Fig. 13. 21). This grave is connected to the masque type mounts under discussion here, through various features: it contained not only cast disc-type and pelta-shaped belt-mounts and the sword with loop-end handle, but also a buckle decorated with antithetical birdheads.

The other finds associated with cast masque type mounts in the Carpathian Basin do not furnish any chronological clues. Some of them are simply stray finds (Bruckneidorf [*Fig. 2. 6*], Leobersdorf [*Fig. 2. 9*], Potzneusiedl [*Fig. 2. 3*]), and the finds from Tolnanémedi and Subotica can be dated probably to the end of the 6th century. The belt-end in Grave 314 at Szekszárd-Bogyiszlói út (*Fig. 2. 5*) was found in a secondary context, together with Middle Avar artifacts.

From these observations, one can conclude that cast masque type mounts among the Avars of the Carpathian Basin appear for the first time to the east of the Tisza and to the south of the Körös during the second half of the 6th century (Szentes-Lapistó; Klárafalva, Grave B 60). Some of the moulded imitations of these pieces equally come from this area, which indicates, that the appearance of these mounts in the Carpathian Basin is due to some kind of migration.

The chronology of the moulded masque type mounts can be deduced from their asociation with different coins: at Kiszombor, Grave O 2 they were found together with a solidus of Phocas issued between 603–607 (Csallány 1939, 125–126; Somogyi 1997, 53–54).[12] Based on this coin Csallány dated the moulded masque type mounts to the first decade of the 7th century (Csallány 1939, 141). The small belt-ends of the masque type fron Grave 8 at Deszk G (*Fig. 5. 8*) can be dated to the same time, because the grave contained a sword with P-shaped suspension loop.

In Grave 3 at Nyíregyháza-Kertgazdaság, a worn and perforated coin of Mauricius Tiberius, issued between 582–602, was found together with moulded masque type mounts (*Fig. 5. 11*; cf. Csallány 1958, 49; Garam 1992, 140; Somogyi 1997, 67–68). Even if the coin was in secondary use, and therefore of little chronological value, D. Csallány disregarded this fact and proposed a date in the first half of the 7th century (Csallány 1958, 49–50).

In Grave I at Keszthely-Fenékpuszta a straight double-edged sword with transverse guard was found (Bóna 1983, Fig. 12. 1), which has a very close counterpart in Grave 85 at Aradac (Nađ 1959, Tab. XXVII. 1). According to D. Csallány, the straight double-edged sword in the grave at Szentes-Lapistó had also been equipped originally with a transverse guard (Csallány 1934, 210, Pl. LVIII. 14). If this really was the case, he rightly connected the grave and the sword at Lapistó with Grave I at Keszthely-Fenékpuszta. I. Bóna assumed that this type of sword was of eastern origin, deriving from prototypes of the Hun Period and belonged therefore to the very first Avar generation in the Carpathian Basin (Bóna 1983, 119). Graves 62 and 67 at Mokrin also contained straight double-edged swords, but these had no guard (Balogh 2004, Fig. 23. 48, 25. 20). Grave I at Fenékpuszta can be dated to the end of the 6th century based on the sword (Bóna 1983, 119). The belt in this grave is decorated with 14 fishtail mounts, which are closely related to the belt mounts found in the goldsmith's Grave 166 at Jutas (Rhé–Fettich 1931, Pl. VIII. 3–5). The Byzantine scales found in this grave were dated by I. Bóna to the last third of the 6th century. The date was based on Grave 34 at Hegykő (Bóna 1961, 136). This means, that the goldsmith buried at Jutas was active in the last third of the 6th century and was buried sometime around 600.

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[11] P. Somogyi has called my attention to the fact, that the coin contained in the grave is actually only a gilt bronze or copper imitation of Justinian's solidus. Considering this and the fact, that the grave itself is actually a crypt, which was used several times, containing therefore burials of different dates, I do not think the close dating by the coin would make any sense.

[12] The coin is considered a solidus by É. Garam (Garam 1992, 142).

Grave 1 at Szegvár-Oromdűlő and the moulded fishtail mounts in it (*Fig. 6. 5*) were dated by the excavator to the last third of the 6th century, a date based on the detailed and very convincing analysis of the grave goods (Lőrinczy 1991, 134–142).

There was a mould for a fishtail mount with a long rib in the middle of its upper part in the goldsmith's Grave 11 at Gátér (*Fig. 1. 2*). It was this mould (and its exact counterpart in Grave A at Tarnaméra) which induced J. Gy. Szabó to date the graves to the mid 7th century (Szabó 1965, 45). I. Bóna, however, combined without clear reasoning the mounts from Tarnaméra with the moulded pseudo-buckle from Grave 151 at Környe and Grave II at Keszthely-Fenékpuszta, and dated therefore the finds from Tarnaméra rather early, to the end of the 6th century (Bóna 1983, 119).

The correct date of the goldsmith's grave at Gátér seems to have been proposed by J. Gy. Szabó the B-shaped moulds and those decorated with parallel chain-motives (Kada 1905, 369) are still considered by Hungarian research to be not earlier than the second third of the 7th century (H. Tóth 1981, 32; Garam 2000, 387; Balogh–Kőhegyi 2001, 337). However, it does not exclude the possibility that the goldsmith could have been buried with a considerably earlier mould, i.e. it does not mean that the burial and the mould or the mount-type cast in it were contemporary.[13]

Summary

1. The earliest cast and sheet masque type mounts in the Carpathian Basin appear in Germanic contexts (Keszthely-Bazilika, Grave 3; Magyarcsanád-Bökény; Szentes-Nagyhegy, Grave 29; unknown provenance/Southern Hungary) as imported Byzantine products during the middle third of the 6th century. 2. The cast pieces in Avar contexts were not produced locally, but arrived partly with their eastern nomadic owners who adhered to their typical ancestral burial rites too (Hajdúszoboszló; Klárafalva, B Grave 60; Szentes-Lapistó), and partly as booty or commercial goods (Manđjelos; Subotica). They can be dated in the last third of the 6th century. 3. The moulded imitations of cast masque type mounts were produced locally, as it is clearly indicated by the moulds found in the graves of local goldsmiths (Adony; Gátér, Grave 11). They are later than the cast pieces, but were not necessarily produced at the same time. The earliest moulded mounts seem to come from Grave I at Keszthely-Fenékpuszta, Grave 166 at Jutas, the Langobard Grave 8 at Keszthely-Fenéki út and the graves at Szegvár (Sápoldal and Oromdűlő Grave 1). These might be dated to the end of the 6th century. A slightly later date, approximately the beginning of the 7th century can be assigned to the majority of moulded masque type mounts (graves at Deszk, Kiszombor, Nyíregyháza-Kertgazdaság, etc.). Still later are possibly the fishtail-mounts from Gátér and Tarnaméra, tentatively dated to the middle third of the 7th century. I consider the pieces from Kecel as the last ones from the cast mounts and the double sheeted belt-end with side-sticks from Grave 67 at Jánoshida as the last moulded one. The other grave goods (bronze ring, fragment of a glass ring, a bronze pin and the fragment of a Byzantine buckle, whetstone) do not enable an exact dating. The beginnning of the cemetery was placed by I. Erdélyi to the first decades of the 7th century, but he did not consider the chronology of the masque type mount within the cemetery (Erdélyi 1958, 57–58). Grave 26 with its Tarnaméra type belt-set belongs to its earliest phase (Erdélyi 1958, Pl. XII. 1–2, 4, 6). This set provides the closing date of the Tarnaméra type mounts and can be assigned to the middle of the 7th century (Garam 2001, 144), i.e. the beginnings of the cemetery cannot be earlier than the middle third of the 7th century. There are no clues for the precise chronology of the moulded masque type mount of Grave 67, but it certainly cannot be earlier than Grave 26.

There are also some problems related to the disappearance of masque type mounts. Some pieces may have been used for a long time, e.g. the *ajouré*, cast masque type belt-end from Grave 314 at Szekszárd-Bogyiszlói út, which was discovered after secondary usage along with Middle Avar period objects (Rosner 1999, Pl. 22).

Considering that the majority of masque type mounts are found on the steppe, it would be a

[13] Grave 1323 at Zamárdi contained moulded fishtail shaped mounts, similar to the one from Gátér, and they were associated with similarly decorated B-shaped mounts (Bárdos–Garam 2009, Taf. 149. 2–7). In addition, the belt was decorated with twofold pseudo-buckles made of silver. This type of mount had been produced by casting as well as by moulding and belonged to the Central Asian heritage of the first generation of Avars settling in the Carpathian Basin (Garam 1991, 73).

logical step, if Russian research could revise the typochronology established by Ambroz for the east European mounts of the Martynovka type and the absolute dates assigned to the masque type mounts as well. The differences in their manufacturing techniques can be evaluated and historical or ethnical conclusions can be drawn only afterwards. The need for a revision of the typochronology of masque type mounts has been a desideratum for a long time, but this can only be accomplished, if Russian colleagues publish the large cemeteries with detailed descriptions accompanied by fine illustrations. This is an absolutely indispensable prerequisite for the correct study of the eastern European material.

Translated by Vajk Szeverényi

Catalogue

Find complexes containing masque type mounts in the Carpathian Basin

1. Cast mounts

1.1. Belt-ends

With straight contour

Bruckneudorf-Heidwiesen/Huningesbrunn (A) (*Fig. 2, 6*; Winter 1997, Pl. 28)
Unknown provenance (MNM) (*Fig. 2. 7*; Fettich 1937, XXII. t. 8)
Kecel (*Fig. 2. 4*; Balogh 2004, Fig. 1. 14)
Leobersdorf (A) (*Fig. 2. 9*; Hampl 1964, Abb. 5. 4)
Szekszárd-Bogyiszlói út, Grave 314 (*Fig. 2. 5*; Rosner 1999, Pl. 22)
Szentes-Lapistó (*Fig. 2. 10–11*; Csallány 1934, Pl. LVIII. 1–2)
Tolnanémedi (*Fig. 2. 8*; Nagy 1901, Figs. 8–9)

With curved contour

Potzneusiedl (A) (*Fig. 2. 3*; Winter 1997, Pl. 47)
Szentes-Nagyhegy, Grave 29 (*Fig. 2. 1*; Csallány 1961, Pl. XXV. 14)

1. 2. Mounts

Simple pelta-shaped

Subotica/Szabadka (Srb) (*Fig. 3. 1*; Bibó-Bige 1903, Fig. 2, 4)

Double pelta-shaped

Klárafalva B, Grave 60 (*Fig. 3. 3*; Bálint 1995, 56, 1–11)
Szentes-Lapistó (*Fig. 3. 4*; Csallány 1934, Pl. LVIII. 5–6)

Triple pelta-shaped

Hajdúszoboszló (*Fig. 3. 5–6*; Fettich 1937, XXVI. t. 1–3)

Fishtail-shaped

Manđjelos/Nagyolaszi (Srb) (*Fig. 3. 2*; Ercegovič–Pavlovič 1973, Tab. II. 2)

Rectangular with pelta-shaped part

Unknown provenance/Southern Hungary (Óföldeák?) (*Fig. 2. 2*; Garam 2001, Pl. 94. 5)

T-shaped clinging mount

Kecel (*Fig. 3. 10*; Balogh 2004, Fig. 1. 12)
Környe, Grave 23 (*Fig. 3. 9*; Erdélyi–Salamon 1971, Pl. 3)

Elongated clinging mount

Budapest-Farkasrét (*Fig. 3. 7*; Bóna 1983, 14, 5–6)
Kiskunfélegyháza-Pákapuszta (*Fig. 3. 13*; Balogh 2002, 15, 5)
Környe, Grave 147 (*Fig. 3. 12*; Erdélyi–Salamon 1971, Pl. 25)
Rácalmás-Rózsamajor, Grave 30 (*Fig. 3. 8*; Bóna 2000, Pl. VIII. 6)
Szekszárd-Bogyiszlói út, Grave 784 (*Fig. 3. 11*; Rosner 1999, Pl. 52)

2. Cut-out sheet-mounts (ajouré)

2. 1. Belt-ends

With straight contour

Klárafalva B, Grave 60 (*Fig. 4. 4*; Balogh 2004, Fig. 15 15)
Keszthely-Bazilika, Grave 3 (*Fig. 4. 6*; Sági 1961, Pl. XIII. 4)
Környe, Grave 78 (*Fig. 4. 2*; Erdélyi–Salamon 1971, Pl. 12)
Magyarcsanád-Bökény, stray find (*Fig. 4. 1*; Csallány 1961, Pl. CCLVIII. 3)
Mokrin/Homokrév-Vodoplav dűlő (Srb), Grave 67. (*Fig. 4. 3*; Mrkobrad 1980, Sl. LXVI. 2–3)
Szegvár-Oromdűlő, Grave 165 (*Fig. 4. 5*; Lőrinczy 1998, 15, 11)

With curving contour

Sonta/Szond (Srb) (*Fig. 4. 7*; Kovačević 1961, Sl. 16. 5)

3. Pressed mounts

3. 1. Belt-ends

With straight contour

Deszk G, Grave 8 (*Fig. 5. 8*; Csallány 1939, IV. t. 6; Balogh 2004, Fig. 4, 26)
Deszk G, Grave 18 (*Fig. 5. 15*; Balogh 2004, Fig. 4. 18)
Deszk H, Grave 18 (*Fig. 5. 10*; Balogh 2004, Fig. 4. 27)
Deszk M, Grave 2 (*Fig. 5. 5–6*; Balogh 2004, Fig. 5. 1–2)
Keszthely-Fenéki út, Grave 8 (*Fig. 5. 4*; Sági 1992, 29. ábra 10)
Kiszombor O, Grave 2 (*Fig. 5. 9*; Csallány 1939, IV. t. 18–19)
Mokrin/Homokrév-Vodoplav dűlő (Srb), Grave 62 (*Fig. 5. 13*; Balogh 2004, Fig. 4. 20)
Mokrin/Homokrév-Vodoplav dűlő (Srb), Grave 67 (*Fig. 5. 14*; Balogh 2004, Fig. 4. 10–11; 17)
Nyíregyháza-Kertgazdaság, Grave 3 (*Fig. 5. 11*; Csallány 1958, VII. t. 1; Garam 1992, Pl. 26. 2)
Petronell-Carnuntum (A), stray-find (*Fig. 5. 12*; Winter 1997, Pl. 8)
Szegvár-Sápoldal (*Fig. 5. 2*; Bóna 1979, Fig. 4. 5)

With curving contour

Jánoshida-Tótkérpuszta, Grave 67 (*Fig. 5. 7*; Erdélyi 1958, XVIII. t. 4)

3. 2. Other mounts

Pelta-shaped mount

Deszk G, Grave 18 (*Fig. 6. 4*; Balogh 2004, Fig. 5. 21)
Deszk M, Grave 2 (*Fig. 6. 1*; Balogh 2004, Fig. 5. 17)
Mokrin/Homokrév-Vodoplav dűlő (Srb), Grave 49 (*Fig. 6. 2*; Balogh 2004, Fig. 5. 20)
Petronell-Carnuntum (A) (*Fig. 6. 3*; Winter 1997, Pl. 8)

Symmetrical pelta-shaped

Unknown provenance/vicinity of Szeged (Balogh 2004, Fig. 19. 13)[14]
Mokrin/Homokrév-Vodoplav dűlő (Srb), Grave 49 (*Fig. 6. 10*; Balogh 2004, Fig. 5. 23)
Szegvár-Oromdűlő, Grave 1 (*Fig. 6. 11*; Lőrinczy 1991, V. t. 1)

Double lunulae

Környe, Grave 151 (*Fig. 6. 13*; Erdélyi–Salamon 1971, Pl. 26)

Fishtail mounts

Környe, Grave 151 (*Fig. 6. 12*; Erdélyi–Salamon 1971, Pl. 26)
Gátér, Grave 11, pressing mould (*Fig. 1. 2*; Kada 1905, 369. 11/a)
Unknown provenance/vicinity of Szeged (*Fig. 6. 9*; Balogh 2004, Fig. 6. 11)
Jutas, Grave 166 (*Fig. 6. 8*; Rhé–Fettich 1931, Pl. VIII. 3–5)
Keszthely-Fenékpuszta, Grave 1 (*Fig. 6. 7*; Bóna 1983, 12, 2–15)
Mokrin/Homokrév-Vodoplav dűlő (Srb), Grave 58 (*Fig. 6. 6*; Mrkobrad 1980, Sl. LXVI. 5)
Szegvár-Oromdűlő, Grave 1 (*Fig. 6. 5*; Lőrinczy 1991, V. t. 1)
Tarnaméra-Urak dűlő, Grave A (Szabó 1965, VII. t. 23)

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[14] The mount moulded from lead has perished almost completely and only the filling mass has remained. The traces of the original decoration are barely visible and it cannot be ascertained that is was of the masque type similar to the one from Szegvár.

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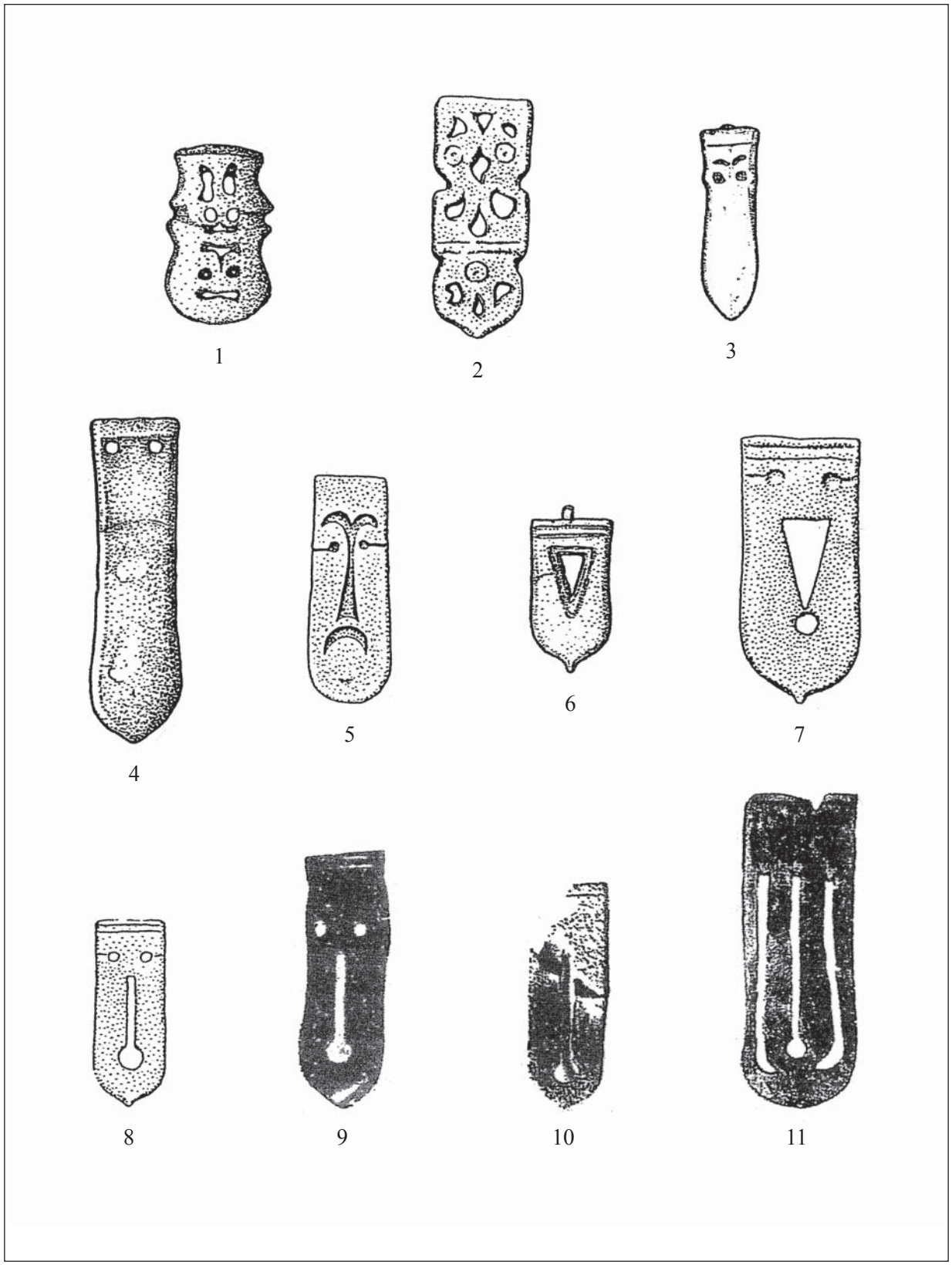

Fig. 2: Cast mounts and belt-ends. 1: Szentes-Nagyhegy Grave 29; 2: Unknown findspot/Southern Hungary (Óföldeák?); 3: Potzneusidl; 4: Kecel; 5: Szekszárd-Bogyiszlói út, Grave 314; 6: Bruckneudorf-Heidwiesen/ Chuningesbrunn; 7: Unknown findspot (Hungarian National Museum); 8: Tolnanémedi; 9: Leobersdorf; 10–11: Szentes-Lapistó

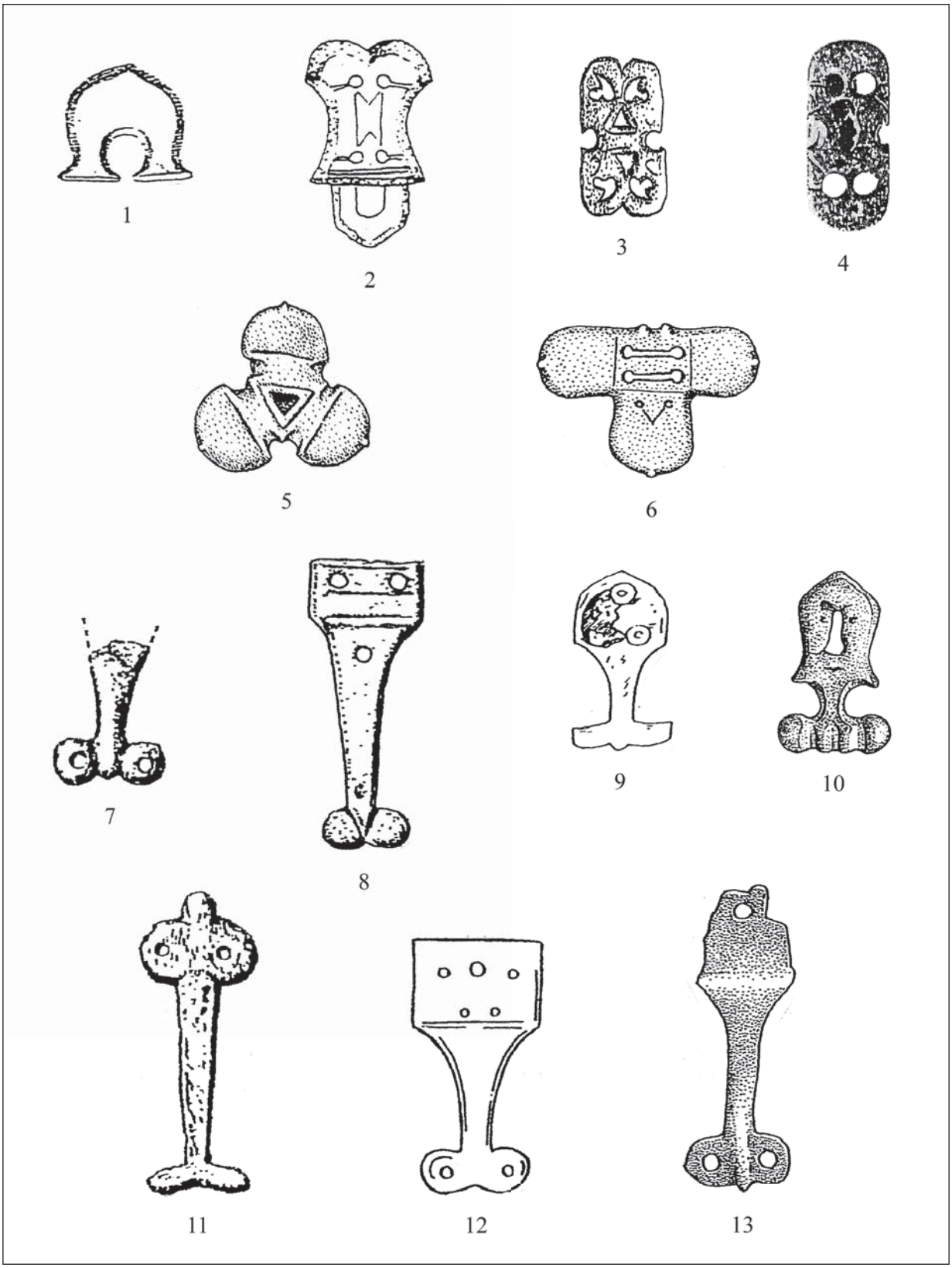

Fig. 3: Cast masque type mounts. 1: Subotica/Szabadka; 2: Manđjelos/Nagyolaszi; 3: Klárafalva B, Grave 60; 4: Szentes-Lapistó; 5–6: Hajdúszoboszló; 7: Budapest-Farkasrét; 8: Rácalmás-Rózsamajor, Grave 30; 9: Környe, Grave 23; 10: Kecel; 11: Szekszárd-Bogyiszlói út, Grave 784; 12: Környe, Grave 147; 13: Kiskunfélegyháza-Pákapuszta

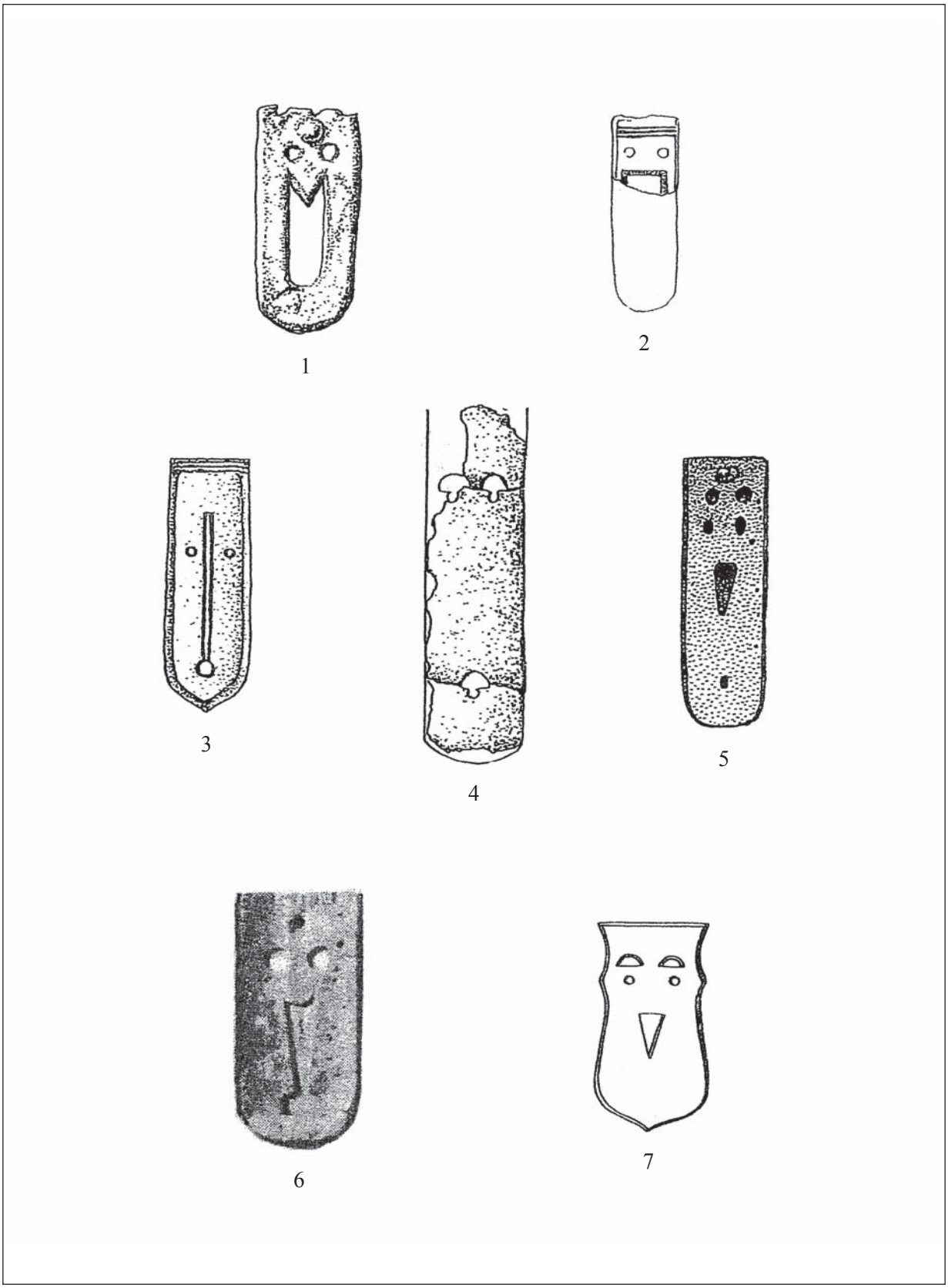

Fig. 4: Cut-out sheet belt-ends. 1: Magyarcsanád-Bökény; 2: Környe, Grave 78; 3: Mokrin/Homokrév-Vodoplav, Grave 67; 4: Klárafalva B, Grave 60; 5: Szegvár-Oromdűlő, Grave 165; 6: Keszthely-Bazilika, Grave 3; 7: Sonta/Szond

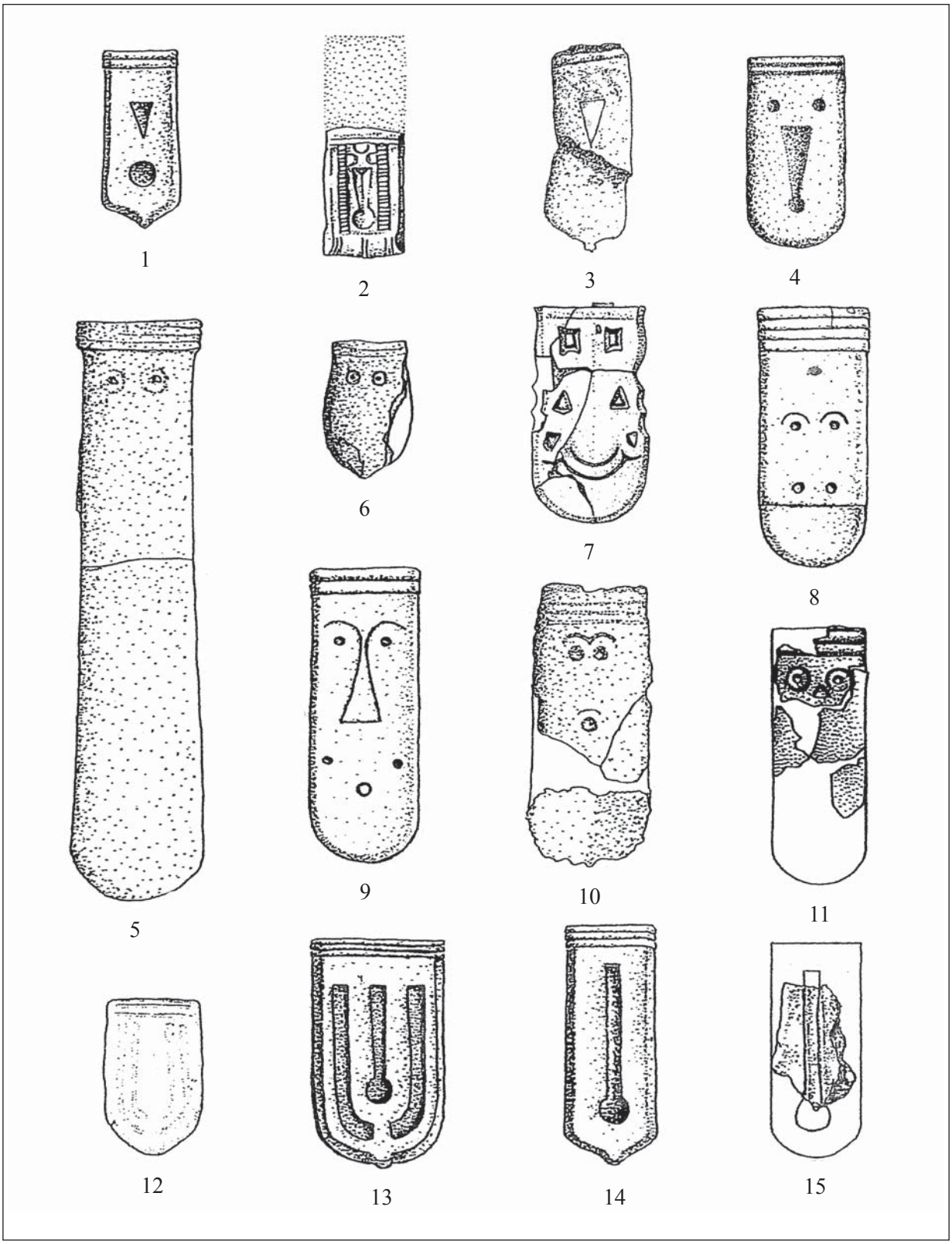

Fig. 5: Pressed mounts and belt-ends. 1, 3, 14: Mokrin/Homokrév-Vodoplav, Grave 67; 2. Szegvár-Sápoldal; 4: Keszthely-Fenéki út, Grave 8; 5–6: Deszk M, Grave 2; 7: Jánoshida-Tótkérpuszta, Grave 67; 8: Deszk G, Grave 8; 9: Kiszombor O, Grave 2; 10: Deszk H, Grave 18; 11: Nyíregyháza-Kertgazdaság, Grave 3; 12: Petronell-Carnuntum; 13: Mokrin/Homokrév-Vodoplav, Grave 62; 15: Deszk G, Grave 18

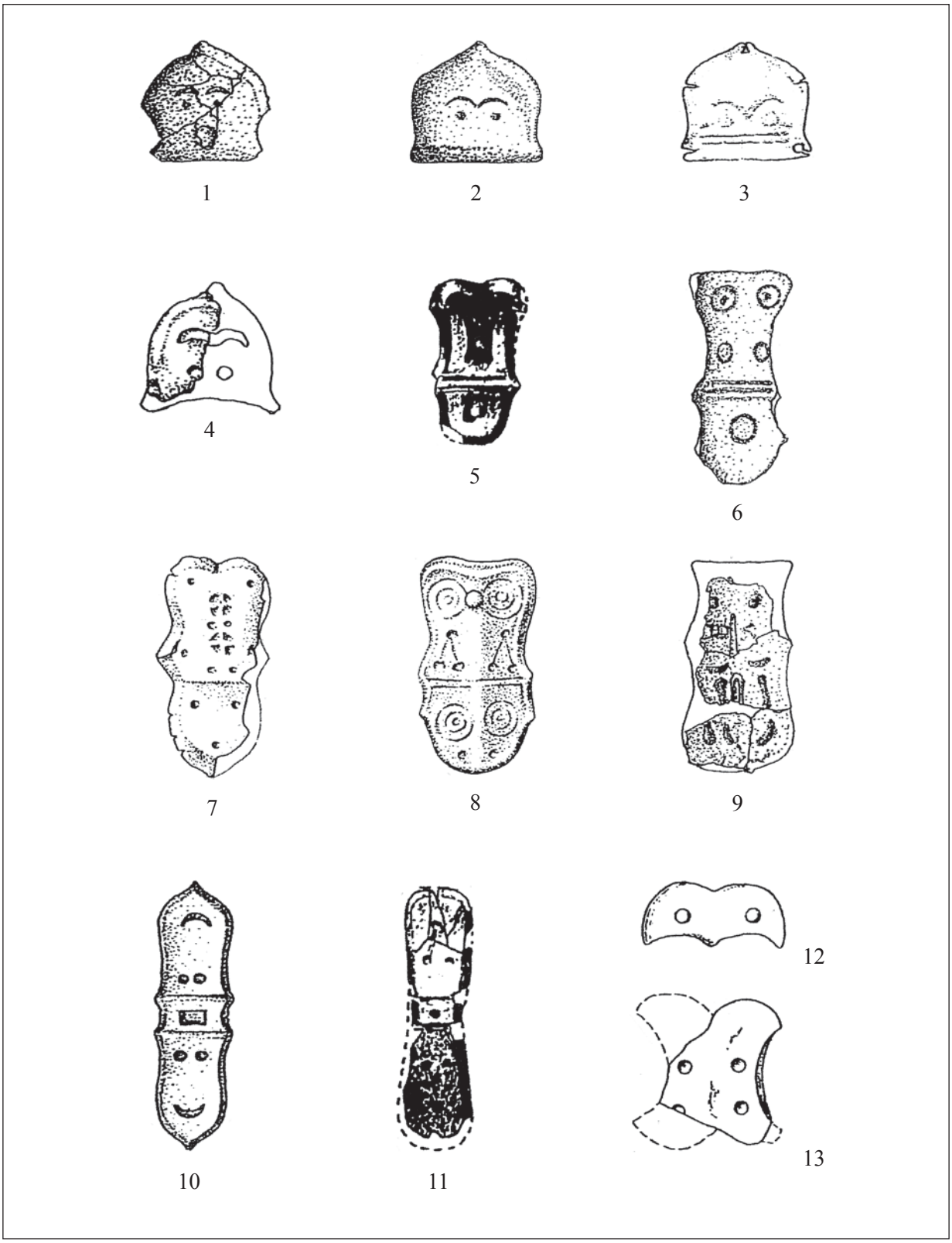

Fig. 6: Pressed masque type mounts. 1: Deszk M, Grave 2;
2, 10: Mokrin/Homokrév-Vodoplav, Grave 49; 3: Petronell-Carnuntum; 4: Deszk G, Grave 18;
5, 11: Szegvár-Oromdűlő, Grave 1; 6: Mokrin/Homokrév-Vodoplav, Grave 58;
7: Keszthely-Fenékpuszta, Grave 1; 8: Jutas, Grave 166; 9: Unknown findspot/vicinity of Szeged;
11: Szegvár-Oromdűlő, Grave 1; 12–13: Környe, Grave 151

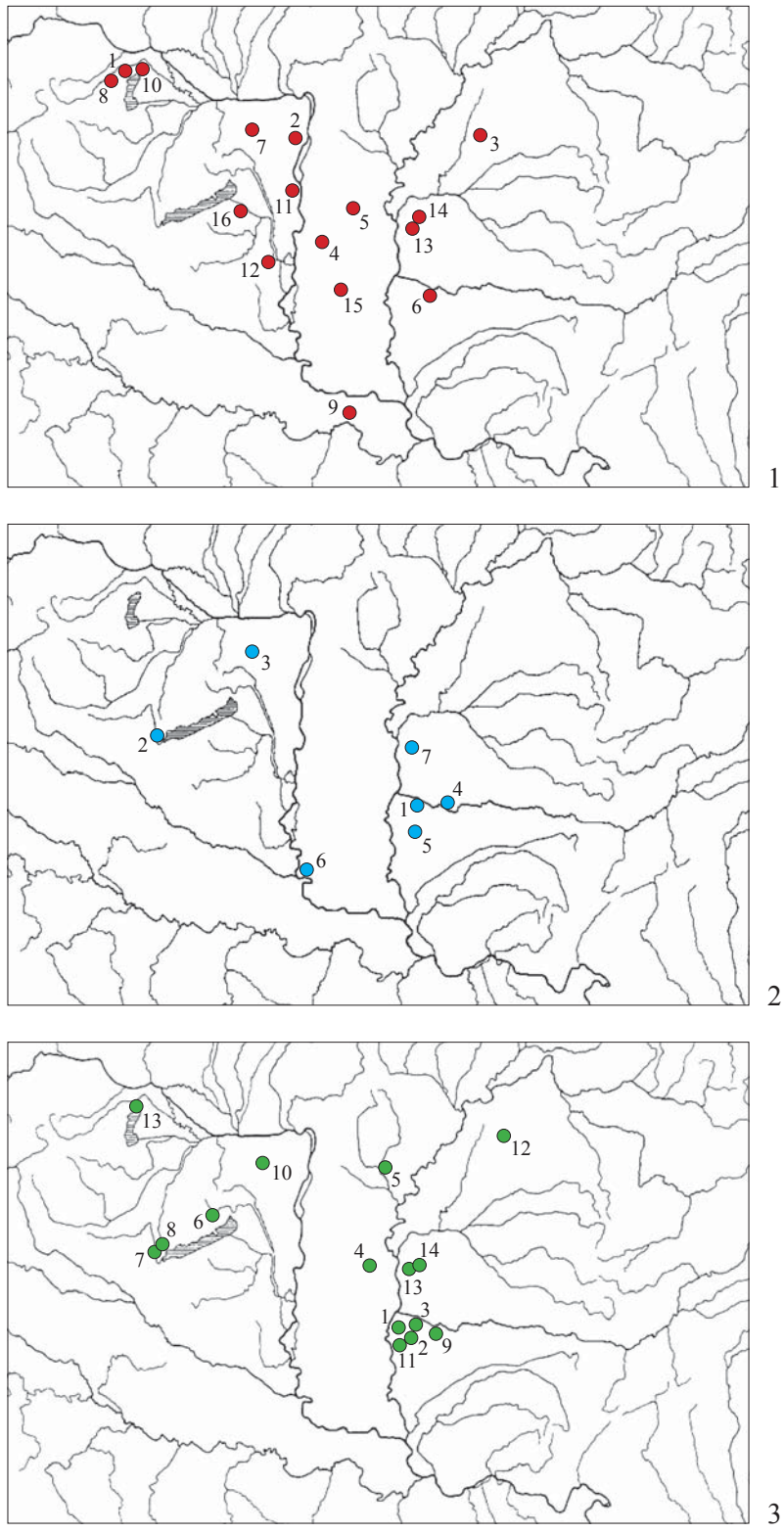

Fig. 7: 1: Findspots of cast mounts in the Carpathian Basin; 2: Findspots of cut-out mounts in the Carpathian Basin; 3: Findspots of pressed mounts in the Carpathian Basin

BULGARIA – THE LINK BETWEEN THE STEPPE AND THE CARPATHIAN BASIN ALONG THE DANUBE

Miklós Makoldi

The topic and object of my lecture, given in Bulgaria in May 2009, was to call attention to some correspondences and "*new*" points of view, which without recognition and explicit statement might fail to give an objective picture of the processes that had taken place in the Carpathian Basin during the 6th–11th centuries.

The last 20 years of the European archeological explorations were marked by the method of collecting certain objects (belt fittings, buckles, earrings) with "*German precision*" and typologizing, categorizing these, then searching for the well-published Mediterranean parallel – considered to be of appropriately high quality – and usually finding the "*antique prefiguration*". The prefiguration, the "*prototype*", which was the pattern for the 'barbarian' master, living in the border of the "*high culture*", to make mass-produced goods that are reminiscent of the antique ones, but of poor quality. After finishing the typological system the archaeologists draw the nowadays ordinary conclusion that the observed object is antique, a counterfeit or it has antique connections. Thereafter they apply this conclusion to the user of the object, in case of having a lot of "*barbarian*" parallels to the whole people, which lived next to the Byzantine Empire. However, besides the typological observation of the object, all the other aspects (e.g. the burial rites) are effaced, not mentioning the exploration of the possible beliefs underlying the ornamentation of these objects.

Let us instance Late Avar griffin representations, which were prevailing in the 8th century in the Carpathian Basin. Gyula László himself also treated the griffin as a heraldic animal, and the "*griffin-tendril*" expression, which represents well the Late Avar culture, also originates from him (László 1974, 204). Indeed, when observing the middle Danube basin, we find that either a new group of people arrive or a goldworking technical revolution takes place at the beginning of the 8th century that basically changes the material culture of the Avars. Changing the pressed plate belt sets with poorer ornamentation and, so to say, slender design, a great amount of honor belts with cast-bronze mounts appeared around the beginning of the 8th century, which were ornamented with griffins and tendrils. Consequently, in the early 8th century a new technique and set of ornamentation appears and causes changes in the male costume of the inhabitants of the Carpathian Basin.

At this point we have to mention that, as attested by numerous historical and ethnographic examples show, the ornamented weapon belt of the steppe peoples indicated reaching the adulthood and was perhaps the most important element of the costume a man can wear, possessing certain symbolic power, Avar men probably also cherished highly their unique belts, which might have been the reason why they brought them into the afterlife, why they were buried with their owners.

If so, there are two main questions to be answered. First, where do the griffin and tendril motifs that can be found on these objects originate from? Second, did these symbols have a meaning for the Avars? These questions were discussed by several researchers, but the most accepted solution is the one proposed by F. Daim, who suggested in 1990 that the Late Avar griffin motif can be traced back to Byzantine and Italian prototypes (Daim 1990). In his article he presents two stray finds – belt buckles from Constantinople and three Italian belt buckles on which griffin representations similar to the Avar ones can be seen; besides this, he emphasizes that the Avars, raiding in the Mediterranean area, could see antique stone sarcophagi decorated with griffins, and these might have impressed them. For drawing a parallel he features some buckles found in the Carpathian Basin, which might have been made in the Byzantine Empire. Eleven years later, in an article published in the 10th volume of the Transformation of the Roman World, he draws similar conclusions about "*Byzantine type*" belts and bird motifs found in the Avar area (Daim 2001), namely that all of the Avar images, even the objects on which they appear, originate from the Byzantine Empire. Moreover, like the birds, the lions depicted on medallions also have Byzantine origins, because "*the Avars, for some reason, did not like depicting birds, so while copying they changed the bird to lion motif, while keeping the medallion form.*" In fact, F. Daim considers all the animal motifs depicted on Avar belts – hence much of the Avar belts – originating from the Byzantine

Empire or Byzantine replicas based on some Mediterranean examples (mostly stray finds without datable context) (Daim 2001, 162–171).

It is not my intention to list in all detail the debatable issues of the articles mentioned above (such as why it is necessary for the Aleppo strap end to be "*at least one generation older*" than its Avar parallels, just because it was made of gold) (Daim 2001, 169). I would only like to call attention to some observations regarding the logic of F. Daim notions:

1. If the Avars were truly inspired by the griffin motifs typical for the Mediterranean area in the 7th(?)–8th centuries, why did they start to produce them in large quantities? Why would they adopt a Byzantine fashion, which in fact was not a fashion in the Byzantine Empire itself?

2. Did they aim at becoming similar to the "*developed civilization*", to fall in line with it, to become identical with it? Especially at a time when they cut off all the political and military connections with it? Especially at a time when the Avar isolation begins, that leads to the fall of the Khaganate?

3. If the griffin motif was really a fashion among the Avars, why were they keen on not having two identical belt sets in the Carpathian Basin? Why did they make thousands of unique belts instead of mass-producing "*barbarian*" goods – which would have been much cheaper, faster and simpler?

If the Avars followed Byzantine fashion, why did their belts differ from the Byzantine ones?

And mostly, what is the reason for having thousands of belts with griffin motifs in the Carpathian Basin, while there are just a dozen in the Mediterranean?

A lot of questions remain without proper answers, if we accept the hypothesis that the Avar griffin motif was just a fashion inherited from Late Antiquity. However, when we observe Avar belts from another point of view, we might get another conclusion. Let us observe the Avar griffin motif from the – rather vexed – aspects of beliefs or steppe traditions.

As mentioned above, in the steppe the ornamented belt is the symbol of reaching the status of adult man. Because of this, the belt is the most cherished object for a steppe man. Consequently, we can assume that the motifs on the belts and their symbolism had a meaning for their owners. If we accept this hypothesis, the fact, that there are no identical griffin ornamented belt sets, becomes understandable. The goldsmiths made the belts according to the owners' unique taste, unique needs and unique attributes. Moreover, the fact that there were thousands of belt sets in circulation itself proves that it was not a choice by chance. It is probable that the griffin motif had a meaning for the Avars and they did not decorate their belts with it by chance.

In order to understand clearly the problem let us review briefly the function of the griffin symbol in the history of steppe peoples. Herodotus wrote that the griffin was the keeper of the Scythian gold "*over the big mountains*."[1] Considering that some time ago in the Valley of the Kings, in Tuva, Hermann Parzinger and his team excavated a Schytian royal tomb (Aržan 2)[2] in which they found thousands of golden objects with the weight of 24 kg, Herodotus's statement does not seem impossible. And what mythical animal can we see most frequently on these Scythian golden objects? The griffin, indeed. Wonder why the Scythians found important to represent this creature on their precious metal and other kind of objects. Why is the griffin typically Scythian? Did they portray gladly this mythical creature because they like the Greek prototypes? Did the griffins of the Scythian animal fight scenes with twisted body and other surreal creatures arise from the Greek's griffins portrayed with geometrical precision? Are the Asian Hun and Hun representations, which are very similar to the Scythian motifs, also based on antique prefigurations? Why did steppe people like more, and portray with higher frequency, the mythical creatures then those in the Mediterranean? It is difficult to find an answer, but the griffin's figure is represented obviously more often in Scythian, Hun and Avar art of eastern origin than in the Mediterranean, even if it had been taken over from external sources. And presumably this is not only because the griffin and all the other mythical animals caught the imagination of steppe peoples, but because it was important in their mythology and ideology and the griffin and other mythical animals had a meaning to them, while in Greece the griffin was truly just a decorating motif, a fearful exotic animal without any special meaning.

Of course this argument is based only on "*art history*"; in fact, we might never be able to decide whether the Greek copied Scythian griffins in a geometric way, or vice versa: the Scythians organized the geometric Greek griffins according to their steppe taste. Anyway, we might risk declaring that the Avar griffins might have more in common with the Scythian ones in terms of their meaning and ideology than with the Byzantine and Italian

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1 Herodotos, Book III. 116, Book IV. 13, 27.

2 See most recently Čugonov et al. 2008, 69–82.

stray finds, despite the fact that at the moment we cannot provide a linear connection between Scythian and Avar griffins.

Herodotus might have been right, and the griffin symbols in fact watch and defend the owners of the belts every day and also in battles (as they defended the Scythian's gold). Furthermore, we should not to forget that sparse griffins can be found in the 9th–10th century among the Magyars and Bulgars; both of them have eastern, steppe origins, thus they are connected to the East in their beliefs.

However, there is another – basically different – way to observe a people's archeological heritage, to examine its origin, and maybe to infer its ethnic roots. If we choose this way we can avoid the problems of interpreting the articles of personal use. This other way is the analysis of burial rites. The topic of my dissertation at the Eötvös Loránd University of Budapest is the analysis of Avar horse burials. While writing my dissertation I found some methodological errors that can mislead the archaeology of a whole period or a whole school studying a particular period. That is the reason why I instanced the problem of the origin of Avar belts and the griffin motif. If we originate a people's belts as their most important object and their symbolism from the Mediterranean area, then the whole people is practically deprived from its identity, roots, without considering that they probably were thinking in a different way than we do nowadays about them. Essentially we degrade them to a Mediterranean border culture. This is the threat of typologizing such problematic objects; dating these based on Mediterranean parallels with reliable date and tracing them back to the Mediterranean.

Observations and comparisons of the burial rituals will contribute more to our knowledge on the matter than mere speculations on their costume (or elements of their costume). Let us observe the burial rituals of Late Avar nobles. If we delve into this issue, we can find two main types of nobles in the Late Avar Period: one of them has a lot of weapons and less ornamental pieces, the other one has less weapons and more ornamental pieces. This is natural, since there were different ways of life a long ago too; there were rich solders and rich leaders. However, there is a common point between them: both of them are buried with a horse in most of the cases; this means, that there is a skeleton of a harnessed horse in or near to their grave. This burial rite makes us rethink why the Late Avar nobles were buried with horses, while this was not in fashion in Byzantium or in Italy. When a people desires to become similar to another one and give up its identity (as it would be clear from items of clothing), it adopts its ideology, including burial rites. This can be well traced in the case of the Hungarians in the 11th century, when King (Saint) István I converted to Christianity the Hungarians by force, which caused radical change in upper and middle class ideology as well as burial rites.

There is no such change in the case of the Avars. Although they lived for three centuries in the Carpathian Basin, neighbouring the Byzantine Empire, the upper class was unwilling to change its burial rites; the rich were buried with their belts, harnessed horses and possibly with their weapons. It becomes obvious that they preserved their identity for almost 300 years as manifested by the long lasting tradition of their burial rituals. Regarding this, I doubt that the cause of casting griffins on their belts was that they envied Late Antique sarcophagi with griffin ornamentation on their raiding campaigns. Instead I think that they used such symbols on their most important insignia of rank that had a meaning and content to them; that connected them to their ancestors, to the steppe.

Naturally, we can ask the hypercritic question: if there are no written sources about the Avars coming from the East to the Carpathian Basin, what would prove this theory, as all their material culture can be derived from the Byzantine Empire?

My answer is that the only convincing argument for the eastern steppe origin of the Avars and their retaining of their identity until the fall of their empire lies in the observation of their burial rites. The most convincing argument is that the leaders of the Avar were buried with harnessed horses. And this is not a sporadical phenomenon. My observations prove that from the approximately 60 000 graves found in the Carpathian Basin 5 000 are horse burials; and these deceased have richer grave goods than the others. This indicates that these riders were the elite of the Avars.

But why was it important to be buried with a horse? We can find its importance by observing which peoples practiced burial with a horse, since it was not typical of every one. By way of introduction we have to know that the domestication of the wild horse took place in Ukraine or in Kazakhstan during the Copper Age, maybe at the turn of the 5th to the 4th millennium BC.

The first horse burials were found in the area of the Belozerka culture, for example in the Sintashta cemetery.[3] We have to mention that horse burials

[3] For a recent review of this culture see Rolle et al. 1991, 27–56. For details about Sintastha see Korâkova–Epimakhov 2007, 66–81.

here are part of chariot burials – thus these are not horsemen's graves, but that of men with chariots that represent the prestige of the elite in the Bronze Age. In any case, horses were used for riding in the Middle and Late Bronze Age, as the large number of bone horse bits indicate (Kovács 1977, 30, Tab. 34–35).

After this, in the 9th century BC, a significant change took place, when the first truly mounted nomadic people appeared – the "*Prescythians*", who buried occasionally dozens of horses into the graves of their leaders. The successors of the "*Prescythians*", the Scythians continued this tradition; they buried more than 400 horses into a chieftain's grave at Ulski Aul (Erlich 2008, 205–206). Not only in the European steppe did they bury horses to accompany the leaders, but also in Tuva (Aržan 1–2) (Čugonov et al. 2003). Among the Sarmatians, a steppe people partly contemporary with but in general living later than the Scythians, the number of buried horses decreased, but still remained a common tradition. This was the case in Central Asia and East Asia with regard to the Huns as well. In Europe the burial of only one horse (more precisely its legs, skull and skin) in leaders' graves became general in the Hun Period (Érdy 2001). This could be the favorite riding horse. The phenomenon of burying only the functional parts of the animal might not be the sign of impoverishment, but this could be the sign of a change in their beliefs, since in Hun graves there is a lot of gold beside the partial horse skeleton.

In fact, the burial of one horse into one grave became typical in the 5th century among the Alans, then the Turks, Avars and Bulgars. Among these people the burial of a complete horse was typical, while in the Bolshie Tigani style (Halikova 1976), appearing in the 9th–10th centuries in the case of the conquering Hungarians, the burial of partial horse dominated.

It is important to remark, that while between the nomadic people arriving into Europe after Christianization, the custom of burying with horses disappears, in the eastern steppe this tradition survives, just like among the Cumans or the Polovets in the Middle Ages, or some Kazakh nomadic groups nowadays.[4]

I hope I made it clear that the horse burial is typical of the nomadic people of the steppe, from the "*Prescythians*" until the present. This means that the custom of burying with horses has been alive for 3 000 years in the south russian or kazakh steppe – or rather it was surely alive in 1990 (Benkő 1998, 80), it might be extinct in our globalized world. This is a burial style that integrates all the – sometimes feuding – equestrian peoples of the steppe into a large cultural complex with similar lifestyle, similar military techniques, similar clothing and weapons. Although the 8 000 km wide steppe zone was never a unified state in the European sense, it can be viewed as a unified civilization,[5] since its peoples had a unified ideology, a unified way of living and traded with each other. For example, the Prescythian horse bit type, which was invented in the 9th century in Tuva, a hundred years later was in use 8 000 km away in the Carpathian Basin; moreover, as an import product, it found its way into the graves of the Hallstatt salt mine. It is not by chance that Chinese silk was also found in Hallstatt (Morton 1953), since the steppe civilization was able to deliver it from the East to the West in the 9th century BC. This civilization was much larger and lived much longer than the Roman Empire; it traded widely, and also reigned over huge areas; it was simply different from the Roman or Greek states. It did not build stone houses; it did not want to introduce a unified religion, etc. This was a much more mobile civilization; we might say it was organized from bottom-up, which had its own value system, its own image about the afterlife, its own symbolic system – all in all: its own culture, the shiniest spring of which was Scythian art that might have adopted parts of the Greek style, but it was basically different from it in its symbolism. This might be the cause of the similarities in the animal fight representations of the Scythians, Huns and Avars, in the sense that one of the animals – usually the griffin – is twisted (its front feet point to the sky, the back feet point to the earth, or vice versa). This type of depiction was not known in Greek, Roman or Byzantine culture, hence originating these from this area, in my opinion, is doubtful.

At this point the role of Bulgaria comes to the front for the Hungarian researchers, as this is the era of the encounter of the eastern steppe and the southern part of the Great Hungarian Plain, which was the westernmost part of steppe civilization. This might be the cause for the Greeks calling Bulgaria "*Scythia Minor*", that is why Scythian object types, Hun type ceremonial cauldrons, Avar type belt sets and Conquering Hungarian type clay cauldrons can be found around the Lower Danube. Thus Bulgaria is an area that Hungarian researches poorly know, but it surely has a lot of artifacts,

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4 See the present-day horse sacrifices documented by M. Benkő (Benkő 1998, 80).

5 On the "steppe civilization" see Csáji 2007.

through the publication of which we, Hungarians, can get closer to our past. Of course, keeping in mind that Bulgaria was not only a connection to the east, but also to the south – transmitting goods and ideologies from the Byzantine Empire as well.

As a conclusion, we can state that the zone of the so called "*Byzantine border culture*" (e.g. the Carpathian Basin and Bulgaria) there were three main components shaping the life of the people living in this era: firstly, local innovations, that should not be let out of sight; secondly, the southern, Byzantine influence, the exploration of which is the main topic of archeologists researching the Migration Period. However, there is a third component: the eastern, steppe influence, that various peoples migrating from the East to the West brought with themselves, mainly shown in their ideology and habits that they kept for hundreds of years. These three factors formed the culture of the people living next to the Danube in the 6th–11th centuries, and if an exploration overemphasizes one of these components regardless of the other two, it cannot provide an authentic picture of the past as reconstructed by archeological techniques of a people by its own mistake.

Translated by Hajnalka Pál

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CONNECTIONS OF THE VRAP–VELINO HORIZON AND THE LATE AVAR MATERIAL

Gergely Szenthe

Recently the Byzantine origin of the Vrap treasure and of closely connected Bulgarian finds has become an axiom in Hungarian and European research, since the theories of an Avar origin have become outdated (Kiss 1995, 101–102; Garam 1997, summarizing the Bulgarian and Western literature: Fiedler 2008, 218–220). In contrast, Bulgarian researchers emphasize the local, Lower Danubian relationships and ascribe the treasure to the Danubian Bulgars (summarized in Станилов 2006, 114–157). The direct Byzantine connections of the Vrap–Velino horizon, which was denominated after the two main sites, are undisputed; however, I suggest that the comparison of the horizon with the archaeological material from the Carpathian Basin could yield intriguing data concerning the internal connections of the two groups of finds and on their Byzantine (or Mediterranean) links, and eventually on their origin.

In order to compare the Vrap–Velino horizon and the material from the Carpathian Basin first of all the characteristics of South European finds, then those of the Carpathian Basin are briefly introduced. First and foremost ornaments are described, secondly the mount shapes, and finally the manufacturing technique. Due to my research field, discussion is restricted to artifacts displaying floral and geometric decoration.

In advance it has to be emphasized that the comparison between the mounts and ornaments from the Carpathian Basin and the Balkan is hindered by their different context. While the archaeological material from the Carpathian Basin abounds in average quality belt mounts, these are relatively rare finds on the Balkans and it seems more likely that they have belonged to the elite compared to the Avar materials. The number of bronze mounts compared to the number of precious metal belt mounts in Bulgaria is relatively high, yet it pales beside the material from the Carpathian Basin. The artifacts from Bulgaria are mostly stray finds and therefore they are hardly comparable (or only certain aspects can be compared) – similarly to the Vrap-like elite culture – to the artifacts from the Carpathian Basin, the majority of which were found in graves. Still, it seems reasonable to correlate the Avar and Bulgar finds, as besides their distinct contexts several resemblances can be discovered regarding their formal features.

General characteristics

Concerning mount shapes, no underlying differences can be detected between the Balkan material and the finds from the Carpathian Basin. In both regions concave suspension mounts, thin, sheet belt mounts can be found; however, traces on their back plate imply that these were frequently cast. Furthermore, cast, two-sided, open-work, U shaped belt ends and their two-piece variants, rectangular and shield/or oval shaped mounts with pendant rings, hoof shaped belt hole guards, etc. are present (on the types and chronology of belt mounts see Daim 2000, 184, Abb. 112).

The concurrences in shape in the two regions are accompanied by considerable chronological differences (see under Chronology).

The Vrap–Velino horizon (*Figs. 2–5*) is circumscribed by its ornaments: in all cases it is a bas-relief that avoids giving depth to the representation and employs a restricted spectrum of motifs. The motifs are cut out conically so the surface of the motifs determines the plane of the surface of the object (the bands are not interweaving, instead they break off).

Bas-reliefs are traditionally associated with carvings, in the examined time horizon their closest parallels can be seen on a vast number of carved bones (quivers, saddles and needle cases); nevertheless, bas-reliefs appear in Mediterranean sculpture.[1]

The fundamental motifs of the Vrap horizon are the circular lobe ornaments, the succulent and sickle-like leaves organized into palmettes and half

[1] On Avar bone carvings see Straub 1997; Kiss 1996–1997, on Mediterranean sculpture see e.g. Wamser 2004, 76, 94, Cat. Nr. 98.

palmettes with one to three leaves. These palmettes are arranged into symmetric compositions; they run along wavy lines and whirlings or two half palmettes build up a simple palmette-tree. A significant characteristic is that the borehole emphasizing the curve of the leaves is situated on the surface of the leaf and it does not separate the stock of the leaf and its folded-back tip.[2]

Absolute and relative chronology

The chronology of the Vrap–Velino horizon is still not properly cleared. The chronology presented by Falko Daim is based on the accurately dated Avar specimen's formal parallels and on ornamental parallels. (Daim 2000, Abb. 112). The Vrap (Werner 1986; Garam 1997; Станилов 2006, 108, Abb. 13), Erseke (Sotheby 1981; Stadler 1988–89, Taf. 1–3), Shumen, Divdyadovo quarter (Атанасов et al. 2007, Fig. 2.) and Târgşor (Станилов 2009, 147, обр. 2) strap ends and belt mounts and their parallels are assigned to the first half of the 8th century, while the Velino type strap ends consisting of two parts are dated to the second half of the 8th century (*Fig. 6*; Daim 2000, Abb. 112).

Although Falko Daim's relative chronology is logically adequate, the absolute chronology might be narrower. The sole difference between Velino and Vrap type of finds is that Vrap strap ends are cast in one piece, while Velino type strap ends consist of two identical plates. The two find groups are chronologically correlated by the treatment of space and surface, their ornaments, and the use of bas-relief technique (e.g. mounts with griffins, with identical framing, geometric and floral motifs – on the latter two see below), despite of the fact that one can rely only on the Avar material as a basis for comparison. So far sheet belt mounts have not been found among the Velino type artefacts and this fact implies that even though there is a chronological difference between the two groups, in the light of the common features it cannot be half a century. Due to this evidence the Vrap–Velino horizon probably dates to the first half of the 8th century and these items were used till the end of the middle third of the century at the latest. The Vrap, Erseke, Divdyadovo, Târgşor and Gledachevo finds in fact precede the Velino, Kamenovo belt ends (Станилов 2006, 92, Abb. 2) and their parallels.

The Avar material from the Carpathian Basin shows broader differences than the Vrap–Velino group. The Vrap-like main belt strap ends with a spout, cast in one piece, and the supplementing rectangular shaped mounts decorated with griffins, strap holders with cast cover and their closest parallels can be dated to the first half of the 8th century; the overwhelming proportion of the two-part strap ends – contrary to the Velino find – with attachment lugs emerge in the second half of the 8th century.[3]

Presumably, spouted, one-piece cast strap ends were continuously manufactured from the middle of the 8th century, while at the end of the century – now with utterly different decoration and mainly with attachment lugs – their use is predominant again. The motif pattern applied by the two relief techniques (high and bas-relief) is entirely distinct. Following the relative variety of – at least in intent – high relief representations in the first half of the 8th century (the horizon of two-part belt mounts) decorations start to resemble to the ornaments of the Vrap–Velino horizon; however, the variety of motif patterns is reduced. The ornament range is based on floral motifs cut from the plane (on decoration and execution [in bas-relief] see below). In the Carpathian Basin at the second half of the 8th century, a previously unrivalled variety of motifs appeared (Szőke 1974, 45–63); these are again characterised by multi-dimensional depictions.

Decoration, mount shapes

Although mount shapes are generally similar in the Balkan and the Carpathian Basin, some shapes and technical solutions present in the Balkan are unknown in the Carpathian Basin; furthermore, the decoration system is somewhat different.

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[2] It has to be noted that a number of mounts from the Erseke find are significantly different, especially those pieces on which the thickness of the sickle shaped scrolls is equal to the thickness of the stem. The treasure's origin is debated; it comes from an unknown provenance.

[3] On the relative chronology of Avar material culture see Garam 1995.

The asymmetrical belt mount from Sofia has close formal and stylistic parallels only on the margin of the Carpathian Basin (for a summary see Daim 2000).[4] Likewise rare, but not uncommon is the adaptation of attachment lugs (or rivets) on the reverse of the mounts, that are cast together with the artefact. This feature is generally regarded as a sign of Mediterranean provenance. In contrast to the riveted attachment, artefacts with attachment lugs sporadically appear among the Avars. Although their use is not preferred, in some cases they appear on certainly locally manufactured specimens (e. g. Orosháza, Szeged, Áporka, Nagypall). The technical background, the mount shape and the ornaments associated with some shapes display a number of concurrences. A case in point is the belt hole guard from the Püspökszenterzsébet ensemble (today Erzsébet, county Baranya): its exact formal parallel is the specimen from Izvorul (Rumania, north of the Lower Danube), which belongs to the Balkan group.[5]

Decorations display a definitely wider variety than belt mount shapes, still the overall picture is similar but more complex. Specimens sharing common characteristics with the Vrap[6] and Velino[7] group (floral ornaments) have appeared in several sites in the Carpathian Basin. According to the accompanying grave goods from undisturbed graves, those examples from the Carpathian Basin whose formal features are identical with the Vrap belt mounts must have been buried in the second half of the 8th century. Nevertheless, it has to be noted that these assemblages contain some earlier belt mount shapes, which were in fashion in the first half of the 8th century.[8] Consequently, a well-documented time gap arises between the Vrap horizon, dating to the first half of the 8th century, and the appearance of similar ornaments in the Carpathian Basin.

The list of exact parallels of the Velino type, two-pieced strap ends' ornaments is apparently shorter in the Avar settlement area (see footnote 8). The number of objects that, alike the Balkan group, exhibit bas-relief-like decoration, is higher, the spectrum of the applied motifs, however, is even more restricted. The designs on the evidently uniformed belt fittings of the late flat scroll horizon in the Carpathian Basin are dominated by the flat scroll leaf folded back in circle and simplified into an acanthus hook, that are occasionally integrated into two- or three-leafed palmettes or half-palmettes (*Fig. 7. 2*, lower part). According to the shape of the panel to be decorated the scrolls are organized into infinite friezes running along wave lines or they fill a circular or trapezoid shaped field in axially symmetric pairs or in fours. The close parallels of the Velino group are partly contemporary and even appear together. A scroll decorated belt set was found during the construction of the Szeged-Fiume vasútvonal in the beginning of the twentieth century that contains a belt hole guard with axially symmetric scroll work similar to the Bulgarian finds. This assemblage can be dated with certainty to the second half of the 8th century.

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4 Áporka-Ürbőpuszta, Grave 20: buckle (Bóna 1957, XXXV. T. 2. The back plate of the mount not shown!); Orosháza-Bónum téglagyár, Grave 105: buckle (Juhász 1995, Taf. VII); rectangular belt buckle with griffin from the vicinity of Szeged (unpublished, HNM); Nagypall I, Grave 16: rectangular belt mounts with griffin and floral ornament (Kiss 1977, Pl. XXVIII); Keszthely, stray find: buckle with rod-palmette (Kiss 2005, with literature).

5 The belt hole guard from Püspökszenterzsébet (today Erzsébet, Baranya county; Hampel 1905, Taf. 254) is the exact parallel of the Izvoul find, however, it was attached by rivets instead of attachment lugs. The parallels collected by Stanislav Stanilov extend the group to such an extent that several other types of finds from the Carpathian Basin would belong to it. I would add a few parallels to the presumed Vrap and Izvorul specimens enumerated by the author, that cover the entire Avar settlement zone: Szeged-Fiume vasútvonal, stray find (Hampel 1905, Taf. 95); Körösladány, Grave 10 (Fettich 1930, 209, 135. kép); Kaba-Bitózug, Grave 87 (Nepper 1982, 12. kép); Tiszafüred-Majoros, Grave 536/a (Garam 1995, Taf. 100); Szentes-Lapistó, stray find (Csallány 1934, 1. tábla). Therefore, I believe it is more appropriate that when the relationships of small and (consequently) simple objects are defined, only their exact parallels should be taken into consideration.

6 Alattyán-Tulát, Grave 170: main strap end (Kovrig 1963, Taf. XIV); Dalj (Dálya), broken, stray find: main strap end (Dimitriević et al. 1962, 111); Gyód, Grave 74: main belt strap (Kiss 1977, Pl. X); Erzsébet (Püspökszenterzsébet), stray find: belt hole guard (Hampel 1905, Taf. 254); Leobersdorf, Grave 93: buckle (Daim 1987, 373. Taf. 95); Orosháza-Béke TSz-homokbánya, Grave 82: buckle, the exact parallel of the Leobersdorf specimen (Juhász 1995, Taf. XVIII); Tiszafüred-Majoros, Graves 199, 1084 and 1221: buckle, belt hole guard and wide, shield-shaped mount (Garam 1995, Taf. 74, 147, 161).

7 Regöly, Grave 119: buckle (Kiss 1984, 77. t.); Szeged-Fiume vasútvonal: belt hole guard (Hampel 1905, Taf. 250).

8 Grave 199 in Tiszafüred-Majoros (Garam 1995, 30. Taf. 74) could be slightly earlier than the other two on the basis of its position and environment; still, horizontal statigraphy definitely dates the grave to the second half of the 8th century. Alattyán-Tulát (Kovrig 1963); Leobersdorf (Daim 1987) and Orosháza-Béke TSz-homokbánya (Juhász 1995) show a similar situation; however, the position of the graves with belt mounts is not as obvious as in Tiszafüred.

From a formal point of view (taking into consideration style, namely bas- or high-relief, and the variety of motifs) the difference between the archaeological material of the first and second half of the 8th century in the Carpathian Basin is notably broader than the discrepancy between the Vrap specimens, traditionally dated to the first half of the 8th century, and the Velino specimens, supposedly from the second half of the 8th century. It cannot be a coincidence that the belt mounts from the Carpathian Basin reflecting the ornamental techniques of the Vrap finds can be dated to the second half of the 8th century. Therefore, these exemplars are chronologically close to the Velino-like pieces from the same area regarding the design and motif pattern. Consequently, it is highly probable that the Vrap and Velino finds are not separated by half a century and their latest specimens are from the mid-third of the 8th century.

As mentioned above, the use of bas-relief is almost unknown in the first half of the 8th century among the Avars (or appears only on simple, small-scale objects probably due to the limits of forming), whereas it can be found on the contemporary Balkan belt-mounts frequently. Consequently, the floral patterns have either sharp or rounded stems, while the surface of the leaves appear to be three-dimensional; their middle is lowered most of the time. The range of floral and the supplementing, or even combined, geometric ornaments is wider in the first half of the 8th century. Beside the dominance of the flat scroll other kinds of leaves, several types of flowers, cornucopia, curling and blooming stems make their appearance as well, sitting along wavy lines or along a straight axis (*Fig. 7. 1. 3*; upper part of *Fig. 7. 2*). Palmette trees with two or three leaves become general.

The decrease in the range of motifs and the execution in bas-relief (stylised scroll work cut from the plane, with the hole on the leaves' surface stressing the curve of the leaf tip) appear later among the Avars, in an even more reduced form. It seems that there is a chronological difference between the Vrap–Velino horizon and the material from the Carpathian-Basin: the latter follows the Balkan finds with a short delay and in a distinct system. While the shapes of the uniformed Vrap group appear in the Carpathian Basin at the beginning of the 8th century or even earlier (the earliest ones are the sheet belt mounts from the 8th century: Vrap type, spouted mounts, mounts with griffin, strap holders, wide shield-shaped and oval mounts), other formal solutions (simple floral motifs in bas-relief) appear with a substantial delay among the Avars.

The chronological difference in the two regions can be explained by the location of the influential centres applying the enlisted motifs and designs (*Fig. 1*) and by the different social background of the owners of the Balkan and Avar finds.

Fig. 1: Sites of the Vrap–Velino group

The motif pattern exhibited on the Balkan finds can be subscribed to the direct cultural influence of the Byzantine Empire or of the Dalmatian coastline (Dyrrhachium). Due to the geographical distance and the political situation unfolding in the 8th century, as described in the written sources, there is nothing to suggest direct influence on the Carpathian Basin. However, the Avars could have been affected from the southwest (from Italy and Dalmatia, DAIM 2000, 180), nevertheless, and primarily Mediterranean and late antique influences were transmitted. The altered use of shapes and motif system in the Balkan and the Carpathian Basin are the result of divergent local tastes. A further interpretation of the chronological delay could be that the Balkan finds reflected Byzantine luxury industry as these belonged to an elite culture, whereas the majority of the Avar bronze artefacts were possessed by lower layers of society and innovations in their material culture appeared later.

The underlying difference between the Avar material dated to the first half of the 8th century and its South European counterpart is the vast amount of Avar belt mounts and the variety of motif patterns.[9]

[9] Because of their vast number only a few motifs are introduced here. The illustrations – the motifs and the designs – are part of my doctoral thesis. In the Avar material floral motifs appear predominantly on (simple or symmetrical) curling stems or on simple palmette trees.

A number of exact formal parallels draw our attention to the fact that dividing the two groups sharply is improper: the essential distinctions are rather structural or originate from the divergent dynamics of cultural development in geographically distant regions.

Manufacturing technique

Traces of the manufacturing technique can be studied singularly on the semi-finished pieces of the Vrap treasure (*Figs. 8. 1–2*). The edges of the mounts are framed by thin welds; the surface of the unchased mounts as they come out of the mould form is smooth in contrast to the moulding channel's highly porous surface transmuted into metal. The section of the sprue is triangular and its end is stained, rounded.

Based on the fact that the welds surrounding the mount[10] are situated in one plane it could be concluded that the mounts were produced in two-piece moulds.[11] Other traces reveal that the material of the two-piece moulds might have been sand. The sprues also support this idea: their porous surface and triangular section inevitably refers to the practice of sand casting, where the mould channels are "*cut on*". The section of the mould channel is triangular or rhomboid, seldom len-shaped, depending on the shape of the tool. The surface at the removed material becomes more porous than the surrounding, stamped surface. In the case of lost-wax casting, a spruing system consisting of wax pipes is attached to the wax copy, therefore their section is circular or oval, and the fineness of the surface is standard.

On the belt mounts of the Vrap–Velino group – maybe because these are elaborate objects of an elite culture[12] – a wide-spread peculiarity present in the 8th-century Carpathian Basin and the Balkan cannot be observed. On the unchased reverse of cast bronze Avar objects a bulging, positive textile imprint can be noticed that is the imprint of the textile stiffening the wax model that was retained on the mould. This textile imprint can be discovered on the contemporary lower Danubian material (Инкова 2007, 238),[13] however, this feature is also present on the geographically and chronologically close Biskupije press mould (7th century) (Korošec 1958, T. 3) and on the reverse of Viking, Scandinavian cast metal objects (9th century) (Korosuo 1946). Chronologically remote examples are the South Siberian Scythian bronze casts, still, these illustrate the pristine origin of the technique (e.g. Wagner–Butz 2007, Cat. Nr. 1).

To my knowledge, utilizing a piece of textile during model-making has no precedent in antique casting tradition. On the contrary, the enumerated examples suggest that this know-how was applied by "*steppe cultures*" and appeared in their contact zones. Its use was required to multiply the wax models in order to produce identical series by lost-wax casting. When making a wax model in a two-piece clay mould, a piece of textile was placed into the wax filling of the negative front, and then the reverse was pressed onto the front side. After the wax solidified, the textile strands stiffened the thin, fragile model. The finalized model (following surface smoothing, chasing) was covered into moulding clay (Brepohl 1987, 61–68) – in the 12th century the clay was mixed with horse manure and hairs –, then fired so the wax melted and its empty place was filled with bronze.

The overwhelming proportion of Avar cast bronze artefacts was undoubtedly produced by lost-wax casting, which agrees with our knowledge on early medieval casting techniques:[14] practically

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[10] It is important to emphasize that only welds running along the longitudinal axis of the object implicate two-pieced moulds. Welds come into existence during lost-wax casting as well, if the pressure of the melted metal cracks the mould. These welds are – generally – not as regular as on artefacts cast in two-piece moulds, since int he latter case welds appear at the juncture of the mould halves.

[11] The moulds used for the manufacturing of the discussed artefacts are always closed.

[12] E.g. the smoothing marks on the back plate of the Velino main strap end.

[13] Although I hardly know marks of casting on Bulgarian finds – partly because of their chased surface apparent on photographs – it is probable that these were produced with the same technique as their Avar counterparts. In the light of the formal similarities it cannot be a coincidence that on the back plate of a number of Avar main strap ends the same longitudinal carving and chasing marks can be noted as on the Velino find.

[14] Some works written in the second third of the 12th century that deal with Early Medieval casting suggest that two-piece clay and sand moulds were in use, however, their arguments are not satisfactory. I. Erdélyi (Erdélyi 1958, 69–73) and N. Fettich (Fettich 1962, 105; Fettich 1990, 129–130) suggest that Avar objects were cast in sand moulds. Still, it is unlikely that sand or fired clay two-piece moulds would have been applied – even though in the early medieval Carpathian Basin so far moulds appropriate for producing belt mounts or other Avar objects have not been discovered.

only lost-wax cast artefacts are known. However, besides the Vrap mounts in certain cases the marks of the producing technique are ambiguous, like the Szentes-Lapistó belt mount set with griffins (ERDÉLYI 1959, 72). Even though on the back plates textile imprints characteristic to lost-wax casting can be noted (*Fig. 8. 3a–b*), the back plate of the belt mounts are identical (because of the direction of the textile strands and their place). This phenomenon is so far unique in the Avar material. If it means that this set was transmuted of one original, then lost-wax casting as a producing technique could be excluded (see above).[15]

Despite of this feature, other traces on the surface of the artefacts suggest that the mount series were cast by lost-wax technique.

An archaeological feature from Mikulčice can prove the existence of sand casting in the Early Middle Ages, in which three kinds of sand were found, with different fineness, and were separated by dark layers (PROFANTOVÁ 1992, 652). In order to build a two-piece sand mould, sand types of different quality are beaten onto a box nowadays as well. The sand is sorted according to its granularity and is stored in caskets covered with damp leather to keep it evenly humid.

Unlike lost-wax casting and the use of two-piece clay or talc moulds to produce certain artefacts, applying two-piece sand moulds is unknown in the antique casting tradition. The same statement can be made concerning the textile imprints on the reverse of artefacts; however, this – contrary to the previously probably unknown sand casting – is the side product of lost-wax casting since the Scythian Period. The textile imprints appearing in Central and Southern Europe in the Early Middle Ages must be the result of a technique coming from sources different from the antique metalworking tradition; presumably these originate from the steppe.

If the cases in point suggest the use of sand moulds, this technique emerges in Southern and Central Europe without having traces in either the antique or the steppe metalworking tradition. A probable interpretation is that the provincial Byzantine Vrap finds were manufactured with a technique still unknown to the north and northeast of the Mediterranean, and that counted as a novelty even at their site of production. If the marks on the Vrap pieces are results of sand casting, the technique must have been an innovation in the Mediterranean. It could be a reason for the fact, that the small number of examined or examinable original Byzantine artefacts were produced by lost-wax casting.[16]

SUMMARY

The comparison of the archaeological material from the Carpathian Basin and from Southern Europe reveals close analogies in form, execution, the use of the bas-relief technique, the used motifs and probably the production technique, although chronologically these are not completely parallel. Nevertheless, the dynamics of change and the structure of the archaeological material are fundamentally divergent.

Due to the political situation in the region (the dominance of the Byzantine Empire) the artistic sources of the Vrap–Velino group and the Carpathian Basin could not have been fundamentally different; hence the dissemblances derive from distinct regional preferences and social reasons. One could select from the canonised mounts and motif patterns according to one's taste, nonetheless, it is apparent that the Vrap elite culture could imitate the Byzantine elite's costume directly, in contrast to the more distant and poorer Avar material.

It cannot be a coincidence that the know-how of artisans, which is transfered slower than the range of belt mount shapes, shows resemblances in the Carpathian Basin and on the Balkan Peninsula. Only the Vrap mounts may differ from this picture as visible production traces imply sand casting. In this case these finds may illustrate how (provincial) Byzantine culture influenced the bordering, Barbarian regions: applying a two-piece sand mould is uncommon in steppe metalworking traditions.

In the case of the Albanian and Bulgarian mounts it is probable that their owners belonged

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[15] It is also possible that the textile was already there in the original and its imprint was transferred via model-making to the negative and then to the wax models.

[16] Examinations were carried out by M. Fecht (FECHT 1988, 309–312). It can be confusing that referring to the covering of the model the author uses the term "Formsand" ("moulding sand") because of surface fineness, instead the usual "Formerde" (moulding clay). The examined Byzantine gold buckle was produced by lost-wax technique because of the overlapping details of its surface. Several implications to sand casting in the early medieval Period come from the doubtful interpretation of difficult-to-understand archaeological phenomena (e.g. CAPELLE 1974, 295–296).

to the elite and imitated Byzantine military costume (Daim 2000, 180), or – similarly to 7th century gold pseudo-buckles – ready belt mounts (sets) were obtained from Byzantine regions. However, the majority of the mounts must have been produced locally. With regard to the Vrap treasure, its manufacture could have taken place in the provincial Dyrrhachium, while that of the Bulgarian finds in the Lower Danube region.[17]

Translated by Vajk Szeverényi

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[17] According to the latest publications, this is conditionally possible, see Fiedler 2008, 219–220.

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Fig. 2: Vrap (Albania) (after Garam *1997, Abb. 1–2)*

Fig. 3: Vrap (Albania) (after GARAM 1997, Abb. 1–2)

Fig. 4: Albania (Erseke?) (after Sotheby 1981)

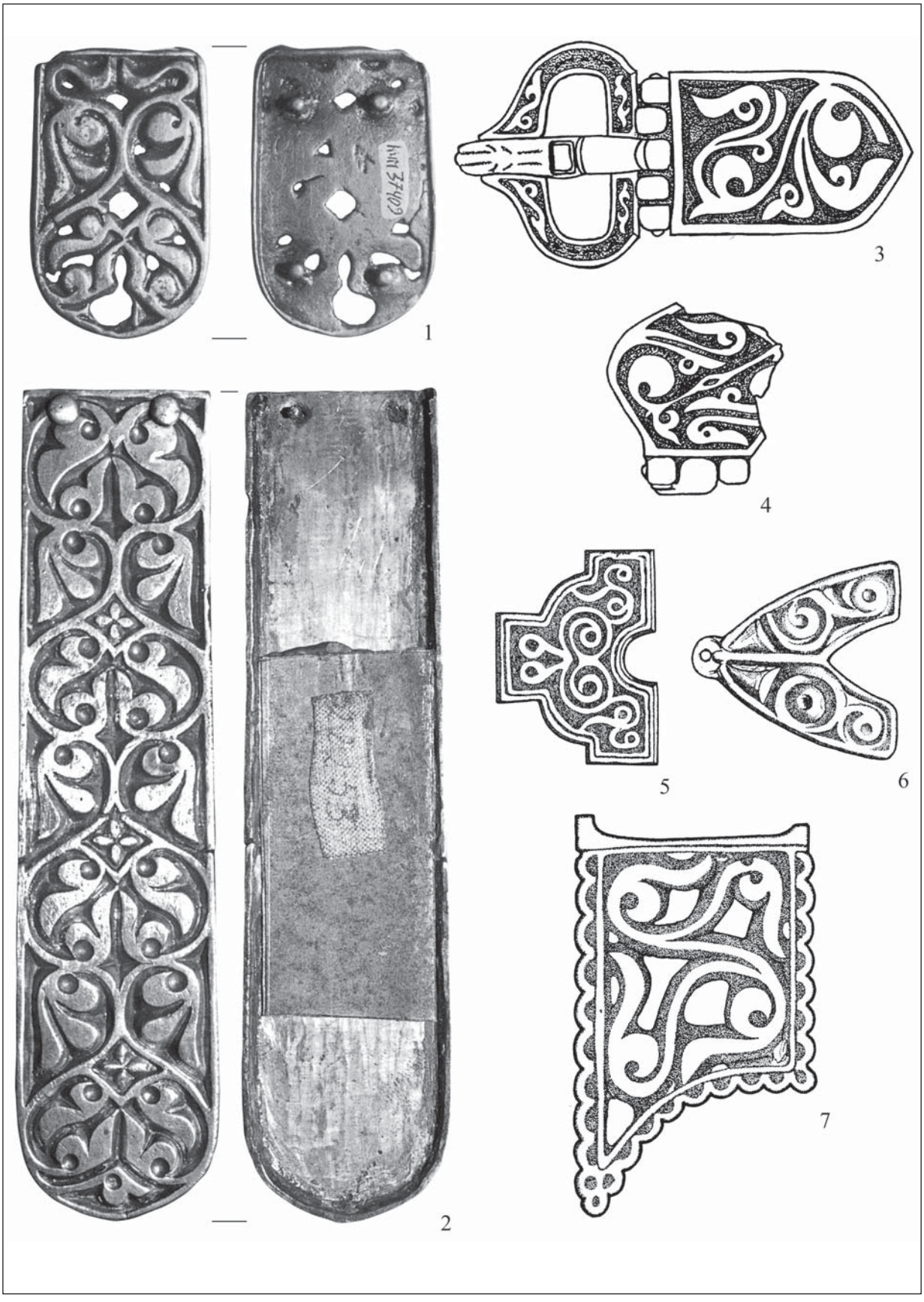


Fig. 5: Belt mounts (Bulgaria) (after STANILOV 2006)

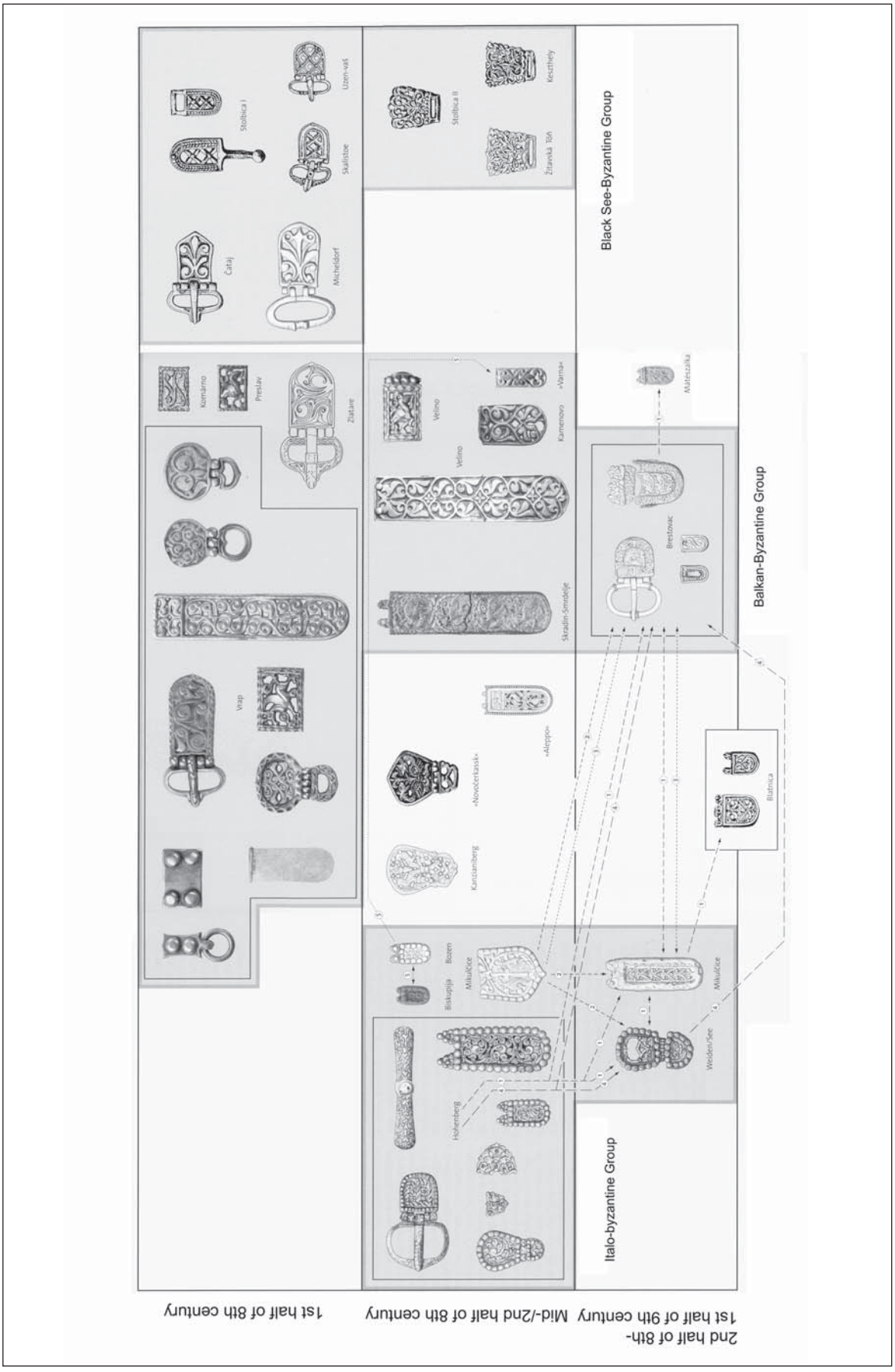
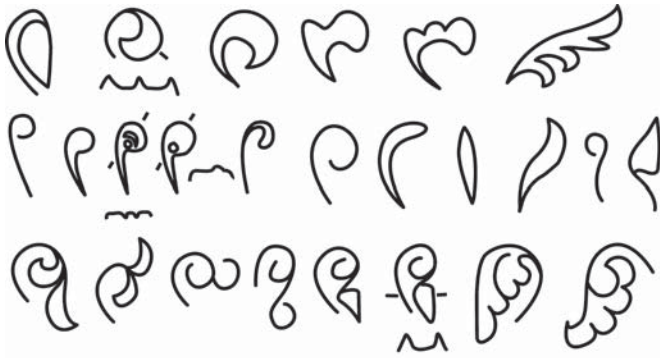


Fig. 6: Chronology of the Vrap–Velino Group: "Byzantine" belt sets (8th century; after DAIM *2000)*



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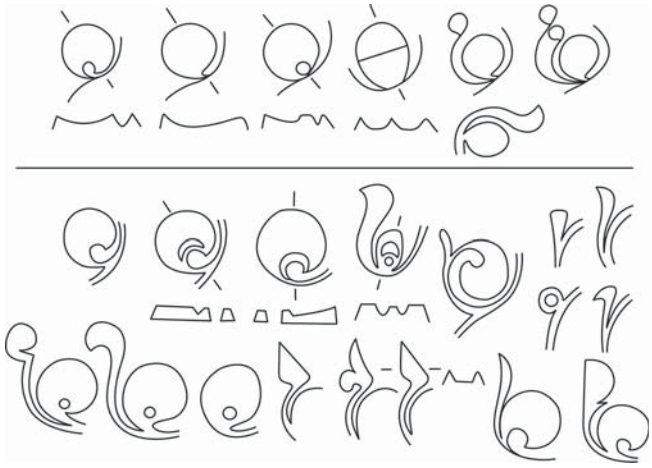

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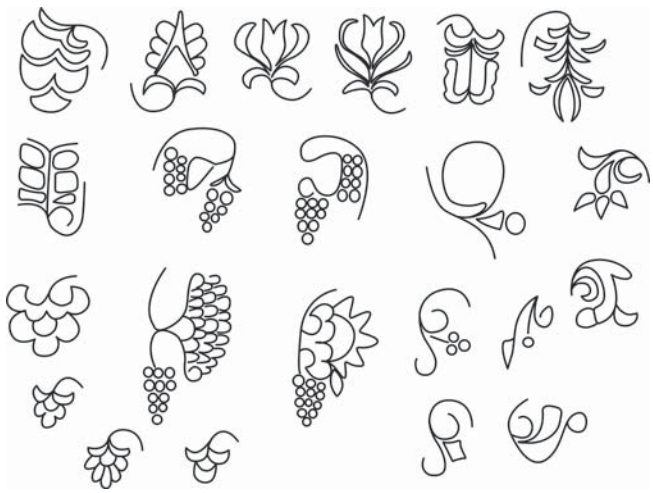

3

Fig. 7: 1–2: Leaf motifs (Carpathian Basin, 8th century); 3: Floral motifs (Carpathian Basin, 8th century)

1

2

3a

3b

Fig. 8: 1–2: Semi-finished or spoiled casting with welds (Vrap, after Garam *1997, Abb. 2); 3–4: Belt mount with a griffin, front and back (Szentes-Lapistó)*

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE POTTERY ON THE LOWER AND MIDDLE DANUBE. BASED ON DATA YIELDED BY THE CEMETERIES

Maria Hristova

The origin and the ethno-cultural tradition of pottery have been the subject of a lot of studies for a long period. Bulgarian publications usually focus on ethnic characteristics, and for that reason the problem has been solved according to the assessment at a given moment of the Slavic, Bulgar and the local heritage. Romanian archaeologists call it "*Proto-Romanian*" or define it with geographical terms such as "*Carpatho-Danubian*", "*Balkano-Danubian*", etc., avoiding a direct ethnic definition (Рашев 2008, 185). The pioneers in these studies made an attempt to solve this complicated problem by seeking the genesis of pottery in neighbouring cultures which had developed on the territories of the Khazar and Avar Khaganates (Станчев–Иванов 1958, 56–93; Въжарова 1976, 380–397). In one of the most recent studies on Bulgar pagan culture it was stated that the territory of the Avar Khaganate in the early 8th century might have been the primary center from which the spread of jars with incised decoration to the Lower Danube as well as to the east of this area started (Рашев 2008, 338). However, a comparison between the pottery of the Lower Danube and that of the Middle Danube has not been carried out until present. Without claiming to exhaust the subject, the author of the present article aims at making up for this deficiency and studies the possibilities provided by this hypothesis.

The mapping of the biritual cemeteries reveals that they are situated in areas close to the capital city of Pliska, northeastern Bulgaria and northern Dobrudzha and definitely provides an answer to the question about the ethnic group which they belonged to – the Bulgars. In general, the pottery yielded by these cemeteries is made on a slow potter's wheel although there are vessels made on a potter's kick wheel. The jar is the most common shape, which can be compared to pottery on the Middle Danube. Jars can be divided into several main groups: conical jars (*Figs. 1. 1–3*), jars with a rounded body, which sharply narrows at the base (*Figs. 1. 4–6*), biconical jars, spherical jars (*Figs. 1. 7–9*) and ovoid jars (*Figs. 2. 1–3*). The decoration is quite varied: straight horizontal or wavy lines covering the entire body; a combination of wavy lines crossing and overlaying each other on the entire body; straight horizontal lines and wavy lines above them – the most common combination; alternating bands consisting of straight and wavy lines, straight horizontal lines and wavy lines or strokes intersecting them, etc. The internal or external part of the rim of the vessel is sometimes also decorated with wavy lines or finger impressions. Pricking and finger impressions are also used as decorative ornaments, and they always cover the upper part of the body. The medieval potter apparently tried to decorate as much of the surface of the vessel as possible.

A number of cemeteries, which yielded plenty of pottery, have been excavated on the territory of the Avar Khaganate. 53% of the burials in the Szob cemetery yielded ceramic vessels and as Ilona Kovrig pointed out, it is one of the cemeteries providing a relatively high amount of pottery (Kovrig 1975, 196). Ceramic vessels were placed in 72% of the burials in the Üllő II cemetery, 68% of the burials in the Áporka-Ürbőpuszta cemetery, 67% of the burials in the Bóly cemetery and 60% of the burials in the Nagyharsány cemetery. The most numerous is the Nové Zamký type of pottery yielded by 73% of the burials (Kovrig 1975, 196). Éva Garam wrote that the "*burial pottery*", typical of the cemeteries dated to the Avar Period, is handmade; it is made from coarse clay and is poorly fired (Garam 1975, 105). Ceramic vessels made on a potter's kick wheel are especially important. Such pottery was found in the Szebény I cemetery; only 4 out of 100 pots from the cemetery were handmade. 23 burials yielded pottery made on a slow potter's wheel. These are jars with conical or ovoid body; the rim is thickened, rounded and everted. The decoration consists of incised horizontal and wavy lines. The shape of the rim, the neck and the general outlook of these vessels reveal basic differences in comparison with the ceramic vessels yielded by the biritual cemeteries excavated in present-day Bulgaria. In the rest of the cases it is indicative of the so-called "*gold yellow*" Late Avar pottery which is not a subject of the present study.

The Szob cemetery yielded a large number of pottery made on a slow potter's wheel – conical

or ovoid jars. The decoration consists of incised wavy or straight horizontal lines, sometimes in combination with pricked decoration (Kovrig 1975, 198). The Pilismarót cemetery provides the same evidence (Szabó 1975, 275–276); it yielded ovoid, conical and biconical jars whose body is entirely covered with incised decoration – straight and wavy lines, single or in combinations. They resemble the vessels discovered in Bulgaria.

The latter three cemeteries are situated in the northern part of Hungary, while the first one (Szebény I) in the southern part. A group of cemeteries was excavated next to it, in Baranya county (Gyód, Kékesd, Nagypall I and II, Romonya, etc.; Kiss 1977). It is worth mentioning that the turned pottery yielded by these cemeteries displays a greater variety of shapes in comparison with the others. The ornamentation is much more varied as well. The ceramic vessels discovered in this region as well as the ones from Vác display the highest level of similarity with the pottery from Bulgaria.

The artifacts from the Nové Zámky cemetery dated back this pottery type to the late 7th– early 8th century (Čilinská 1966, 135; Рашев 2008, 186). In Bulgaria such pottery is known from early cemeteries, such as at Balchik and Novi Pazar, dated to the late 7th–early 8th century as well. Quite revealing is the fact that burial № 119 in the Balchik cemetery yielded fragments of such pottery together with a "*Corinthian*" type belt buckle (Дончева-Петкова 2007, обр. 8). As a result the common date of the introduction of this type of pottery into the territories along the Middle and Lower Danube makes it impossible for it to have been introduced in Northeast Bulgaria and Dobrudzha from the Avar Khaganate in the 8th century (Рашев 2008, 186). It seems more likely that it emerged in a center located outside the territory of both the Avar Khaganate and the Bulgar Khanate. A possible solution of the problem was suggested by S. Angelova in her study on the traditions which have influenced the formation of Bulgar pottery. Studying gray ware with incised decoration dated to the Early Avar Period, she focused her attention on the Kiskőrös-Pohibuj-Mackó cemetery dated to the first half of the 7th century and defined by D. Csallány as belonging to the distribution area of the monuments related to the Bulgars-Kutrigurs. S. Angelova suggested that after their withdrawal to the east, the Bulgar-Kutrigurs carried over this pottery tradition to the Dnieper (Ангелова 1983, 46–49).

It is worth pointing out that the authors who study the origin of this pottery comment on the influence of the Late Roman tradition (Миятев 1948, 20–35; Eisner 1952, 366–368; Comșa 1968, 449–455; Michailov 1973, 70–72). However, such influence existed not only on the territories along the Middle Danube. A number of cemeteries in Abkhazia yielded ceramic vessels similar to those mentioned above – Cibilium I, Cebelda. In Abkhazia this type of pottery was found together with 2nd–4th century coins (Воронов–Шенкао 1982), thus suggesting another possible center which could have influenced the pottery tradition of the Bulgar tribes – the North Caucasus. Such possibility has also been suggested by M. I. Artamonov, who drew attention to the fact that "*the close similarity between the jars with incised decoration of the Danubian Bulgars and the kindred population living in East Europe makes impossible their independent emergence in the two cultures*" (Артамонов 1970, 11–12). He believes that this pottery appeared as a result of the influence of the pottery production in the Byzantine Black Sea region.

A possible explanation for the popularity of the incised decoration can be sought in its technical aspects. It is most typical for pottery made from clay with large quarts inclusions. This sustainability of early medieval pottery tradition in Bulgaria resulted in the definition of two main categories – "*pattern burnished pottery made from fine clay*" and "*pottery with incised decoration made from sandy clay*". Probably the incisions on the pots made from sandy clay were due to one of the technological stages of pottery manufacture – the drying of the vessel prepared for firing.

Finishing the subject of the distribution of the jars with incised decoration, I would like to draw attention to a fact that was presented in Hungarian publications (Garam 1975, 105), but remained without comment. The burials yielding pottery belonging to the discussed group are the ones in which the lowest number of other grave goods were uncovered. These burials also yielded square and trapezoid belt buckles, certain types of earrings, small iron knives and beads – artifacts which are also found on the Lower Danube. The presence of belt-sets among them is an exception rather than a rule.

Plates and bowls are the other shapes which are found in the cemeteries both on the territories of Bulgaria and Hungary, without being very common (*Figs. 2. 4–5*). While the variety of types in Bulgaria is greater, in Hungary there are only two types – semi-spherical plates with straight or inverted rim and bowls with a short body resembling metal prototypes. Some of the vessels from Bulgaria bear decoration imitating a *poinson*, a fact confirming the suggestion of the influence of toreutics. These plates and bowls are believed to be related with the early phases of the Bulgarian cemeteries, while on the territory of the Avar Khaganate they are found in the Middle and the Late Avar Periods as well.

There are interesting similarities regarding the beakers which are usually called buckets (*Fig. 2. 6*). Avar cemeteries such as the Szebény cemetery also yielded beakers (Garam 1975, 105). They had undoubtedly been influenced by wooden vessels proved by the decoration imitating the hoops for binding the wooden parts. Again the beakers/buckets from Bulgaria bear more varied and extremely sustainable ornaments – bands consisting of two incised parallel lines and bands of wavy lines in between. Another peculiar feature of beakers/buckets from the cemeteries in Bulgaria is that they have two small opposite round openings in the upper part of the walls apparently marking the places where the handle had been attached. A bucket found in the Istria-Capul Viilor cemetery has a tab as well (Зирра 1963, обр. 388; Fiedler 1992, Taf. 34. 7). Buckets can also be related to the earlier phases of the biritual cemeteries. The fact that they are missing in the pottery assemblage from the Novi Pazar cemetery might be a result of the fact that a greater part of the cemetery was destroyed by a stone quarry. Buckets were yielded by two other early Bulgar cemeteries at Balchik and Topola.

Ceramic wine vessels are present in the pottery assemblages yielded by the cemeteries both on the Lower and Middle Danube. These vessels are typical for the early period on the territory of the Avar Khaganate (Garam 1975, 105). Only one vessel was found in Bulgaria, in a cemetery near Hitovo (*Fig. 2. 7*). Such wine vessels, found on the territory of the Khazar Khaganate, are dated to the 8th–9th centuries (Плетнёва 1976, обр. 14; Тарабнов 1993, обр. 9. 3). According to its morphological features, the wine vessel from Hitovo resembles the most the vessels from the destroyed burials at Chistyakovo and Sobolevska kariera (Кравченко–Шамрай 2000, рис. 2. 1–2, 3).

The similarities end here. The cemeteries on the Middle Danube do not yield jugs/oinochoes (wine jugs), which are very typical for the cemeteries in Bulgaria. There are few amphora-shaped pitchers and they are regarded imports. The yellow ware discovered in the Sultana biritual cemetery is also considered "*a foreign body in the pottery assemblage of the Lower Danube*" (Fiedler 1992, 155–156) although the recent excavations in the Pliska region can make this statement subject to revision (Дончева-Петкова 2007; Dončeva-Petkova 2007a). The "*tea-pots*" yielded by Late Avar cemeteries, as well as the bottle-shaped vessels discovered in the Middle Danube region and dated to the 7th and 8th centuries, are also missing in the biritual cemeteries of Bulgaria.

In conclusion, it can be said that he differences between the pottery assemblages on the Lower and Middle Danube are very strong. The similarities might be a result of common origin and the influences during the formation of this pottery tradition in which Kutrigurs and other tribes belonging to the Bulgar group have taken part. The distribution of this pottery can be related to the migrations of Asparukh's and Kuber's Bulgars mentioned by the written sources.

Translated by Tatiana Stefanova

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Fig. 1: 1: Topola, Grave 215; 2: Hitovo, Grave 51; 3: Karamanite, Grave 9; 4–6: Hitovo; 7: Topola, Grave 84; 8: Topola, Grave 117; 9: Topola, Grave 15

Fig. 2: 1: Topola, Grave 23; 2: Cherna, Grave 2; 3: Hitovo, Grave 20; 4: Topola, trizna from Grave 173; 5: Topola, Grave 4; 6: Topola, Grave 6; 7: Hitovo

TWO BULGAR PAGAN BURIALS FROM PLOVDIV

Ivo Topalilov *– Kamen* Stanev

The available written sources provide scarce information about Plovdiv in the early medieval period, which makes it difficult to trace the history of the city from the early 7th until the late 10th century in details. This fact turns the results of archaeological excavations into a source of primary importance. Although a significant part of the territory of the ancient city has been excavated, there are few complete publications of excavated sites and finds dated to the medieval period have been given little attention (Морева-Арабова 2001, 100–113; Топалилов–Станев 2012, 11–37). As a result a number of important questions such as the transition from Antiquity to the Middle Ages, the ethnic characteristics of the population, the topography of the city, etc. remain unanswered. For that reason the discovery and publication of materials dated to the early medieval period is very important for the reconstruction of the history of the city in the above mentioned time span.

In the spring of 2008 archaeological excavations were carried out on 14 T. Kableshkov Str. The site is situated in the central part of the city, in the southwest foothills of Sahat tepe hill. The excavated area was only 60 m^2 large but with view to the fact that this part of the ancient city is not very well known, the results from the excavations, beyond any doubt, will contribute a lot to our knowledge on the topography of the city of Plovdiv in Roman, Late Antique and medieval periods (*Fig. 2. 1*).[1]

The archaeological excavations revealed parts of several Roman and Late Antique buildings. Their demolition can be related to the Avar-Slavic invasions in the first half of the 7th century (*Fig. 2. 2*). After that the area was used for a cemetery and the grave pits were dug into the ruins of the Late Antique buildings. Two of these burials were excavated and are published in the current article (*Fig. 2. 3*). The burials and the cemetery can be dated to the 9th century based on the grave goods and the burial rituals. Large parts of the ancient constructions, visible on the surface at that time, have been demolished and the construction material was taken away in the second half and the end of the 19th century;[2] subsequently the terrain was leveled up and raised artificially with 3.5 m by various construction activities, related to the modern city, which damaged the burials.

As it was already pointed out, the excavations revealed Bulgar pagan burials dated to the 9th century. Three burials were defined and two of them were excavated. One of the grave pits was dug into the ruins of a sewer made from bricks, while the other into the mudbrick ruins of a Late Antique building. It was impossible to excavate the third burial because it was in the northern section of the trench.

Burials

Burial № 1 (*Fig. 3. 1*): It was not possible to define the depth of the burial pit because of the later disturbance of the excavated area. The grave pit measured 1.82 × 0.6 m and was W–E oriented. It was enclosed by a row made from crushed stones and brick fragments. Only the southern edge of the pit has survived; the northern edge and part of the skeleton were damaged by the later extraction of stones from the walls. The skeleton was extended on its back with its head pointing to the west. The arms were straight along the body. The skull was badly damaged and only the mandible has survived. The left arm and thigh bones were missing. The feet were also missing and it was not possible to find out whether they had been ritually cut off or destroyed by later intrusions. The grave goods comprised a burnt *clay jar* (*Fig. 3. 2*), located to the left at the legs. It has an ovoid barrel-shaped body and is completely preserved. The maximal diameter is in the middle part of the jar and from there the body gradually narrows to the rim and the bottom. The neck of the vessel is very short. The rim is slightly flaring outward and ends with a plastic band, decorated with an incision in the middle. The

[1] A short report on the excavation results is available in Топалилов–Станев 2009, 392–394.

[2] On the pipes found in the trenches made for extracting stone blocks from the ancient walls see Тодоров–Топалилов 2009, 201–210.

bottom is slightly concave. The ornament consists of parallel incised lines which cover almost the entire body of the vessel. They have been incised by a comb-shaped tool. The jar has a burnt surface, the clay is brown with sandy inclusions. An imprint from the potter's wheel is visible at the bottom. The jar is 12.8 cm high and the diameter of the rim is 9.1 cm.

Burial № 2 (*Fig. 3. 3*): The burial was made in a grave pit measuring 1.12 × 0.50 m, which is W–E oriented. The burial is partially destroyed by later intrusions. The deceased was laid in a semi-crouched position on his right side with the head pointing to the west. The skull is missing due to later intrusions. The right arm is extended parallel to the body, and the left one is folded. The pelvis and the right leg are missing, and the left leg is tightly folded backward at the knee. The feet are cut off and placed at the knee. Charcoals were found at the bottom of the grave pit, under the skeleton. The grave goods comprise a pair of bronze *earrings* (*Fig. 3. 4*) found at the place where the skull was supposed to be. One of the earrings is badly damaged; only a highly corroded fragment has survived and, unfortunately, it fell apart in the process of excavation. The second earring is in a good state of preservation. Both earrings are simple open rings made from bronze wire with a round section and decorated with a small ring made from wire.

The grave goods found in the grave pits allow the dating of the two burials to the 8th–9th centuries. The turned pot yielded by burial № 1 corresponds to L. Doncheva-Petkova's Type III (Дончева-Петкова 1977, 51–52). This type of vessel is dated to the First Bulgarian Kingdom and its origin definitely has to be related to the Bulgars, a thesis proved by the fact that these vessels are typical for the steppes of the North Black Sea coast (Дончева-Петкова 1977, 52–53). The pair of rings yielded by burial № 2 corresponds to Type I.2 after V. Grigorov (Григоров 2007, 13); they are also dated to the First Bulgarian Kingdom. Such earrings were found in a number of cemeteries – both pagan (Slavic and Bulgar) and Christian ones. This type of earring appeared in the second half of the 7th and the 8th centuries and specialists believe that their origin is to be sought in the Avar Khaganate. It was adopted by the Bulgar culture in the 8th or early 9th centuries and is typical mainly for present-day North Bulgaria and the Wallachian plain. In present-day South Bulgaria such earrings were found only in Ablanitsa and Lyubenovo (*Fig. 1*; Григоров 2007, 16).

Fig. 1: Location of the site

Both grave pits are W–E oriented, the head of the deceased pointing to the west. This orientation is typical for Christian burials, but this does not necessarily mean that all W–E oriented burials are Christian. On the contrary, Bulgar pagan burials which are W–E oriented (Въжарова 1976, 428; Димитров 1987, 210; Меламед 1989, 120; Рашев 2008, 199; Григоров 2006, 47–64)[3] have been found very often in the excavated cemeteries to the north of the Danube and this orientation is the main one for the Bulgars who settled in the Khazar Khaganate (Плетнёва 1999, 65–66, 70, 73, 75–76). The pagan interpretation of the burials from Plovdiv is supported by the fact that the arms of the deceased were laid extended along the body and also by the presence of the jar in grave pit № 1. Placing stones at the bottom of the grave pit parallel to the buried body was recorded in a number of Bulgar pagan burials or cemeteries of Bulgar neophytes, who still kept many of their pagan burial rituals and traditions – at Devnya 2 (Димитров 1970, 24) and Devnya 3 (Димитров 1972, 48–49); Krassen (Станчев 1986, 30); Cherna (Василчин 1989, 200); Hitovo (Йотов 1997, 158); Balchik (Дончева-Петкова 2009, 79) and Histria (Зирра 1963, 364). The positioning of the body of the deceased in grave pit № 2 is even more typical.

[3] Such burials were recently discovered in the cemetery at the town of Balchik (Дончева-Петкова 2009, 78).

Pseudo-crouched burials were found in many Bulgar pagan cemeteries – at Balchik (Димитров 1991, № 10, 21; Дончева-Петкова 2009, 79); Bdintsi (Въжарова 1981, 78); Varna (Димитров 1976, 111); Garvan 2 and 3 (Въжарова 1976, № 26);[4] Devnya 1 (Димитров 1971, 61) and Devnya 3 (Димитров 1972, 50); Dolni Lukovit (Въжарова 1976, № 26);[5] Durankulak (Меламед 1989, 123); Kyulevcha (Въжарова 1976, № 10, 26, 47, 64); Nikolovo (Станчев 2002, 15–16); Novi Pazar (Станчев 1958, № 7, 19, 21, 24, 32, 35); Nozharevo (Рашев–Станилов 1989, 216), Topola (Ангелова et al. 1997, № 351), Hitovo 2 and 3 (Йотов 1997, № 12, 71, 10); Izvoru (Mitrea 1989, № 52, 96, 127, 148, 159, 179, 220, 268, 311, 361), etc. Some of the pagan cemeteries yielded skeletons, whose feet have been cut off as a measure of precaution against turning into a vampire (Флёров 1989, 177–186; Стоянова 2007, 154–166). Such burials were found in the cemeteries at Zavoda za manometri (Димитров 1976, 111); Devnya 1 (Димитров 1971, 61); Devnya 2 (Димитров 1970, 28),[6] and Devnya 3 (Димитров 1972, 50); Dolni Lukovit (Въжарова 1976, № 81, 91–92); Tau-Kipchak (Баранов 1989, 159), etc. Putting charcoals in the grave pit – under the corpse, on top of it or in the fill of the grave pit – as well as lighting a fire is also a ritual typical for pagan funerary practices and was recorded in many cemeteries – at Bdintsi (Въжарова 1981, № 120); Krassen (Станчев 1986, 33); Kyulevcha (Въжарова 1976, № 8, 14–15, 84, 90); Nikolovo (Станчев 2002, 24); Novi Pazar (Станчев 1958, № 31, 37–39) and Balchik (Дончева-Петкова 2009, 79).

The characteristics of the two burials published in the current article – the arm extended parallel to the body, a jar placed as a grave good, the stone lining, the crouched position of the buried body and the cutting off of the feet – are typical for Bulgar pagan burial rituals. All these together with the date of the jar and the earrings provide grounds to accept that these were Bulgar pagan burials or burials of Bulgars recently converted to Christianity, who were still under the very strong influence of pagan rituals. It has to be explicitly pointed out that these rituals were typical neither for the Slavs, who burnt their dead, nor for the Byzantines, who were Christians.

A more precise dating of these burials can be achieved with the help of written sources providing information about historical events affecting the present-day city of Plovdiv. There is information about Bulgars who sought refuge in the Byzantine Empire in the 8th and early 9th centuries. However, it is beyond any doubt that they were converted to Christianity once they had entered the territory of the Empire. Kana syubigi Telerig (Бешевлиев 1992, 247),[7] the group of immigrants in 812[8] and Thaddeus the Scythian (Гюзелев 2002, 54) are particularly obvious examples. Therefore the excavated Bulgar pagan cemeteries cannot be connected to Bulgar immigrants in the Byzantine Empire. Neither does it seem very probable that Bulgar immigrants would have been left by the Byzantines to live in fortresses near the border such as Plovdiv.

In 836 a war started between Bulgaria and the Byzantine Empire and Plovdiv was taken by the Bulgars. This information is provided by the stone inscription of kana syubigi Malamir – *"...he led an army against the Greeks and devastated the Provat fortress and the Burdizo fortress and the lands of the Greeks and gained much of glory and came into Philippopol and the Greeks ran away and then kavhan Isbul together with the most glorious archon organized a meeting with the Philippopolians."* (Бешевлиев 1992, 136–137, № 13). It is the same year which can be accepted as *terminus post quem* for the earliest settling of Bulgars in Plovdiv. The year 864, when the Bulgars were converted to Christianity and it became their dominant religion, has to be accepted as *terminus ante quem*. Therefore, the burials presented above have to be dated to the period between 836 and 864 or slightly later, if we consider the fact that the adoption of Christianity in general and Christian funerary ritual in particular required a certain period of time.

The discovery of these burials shows the ethnic processes which took place in the city after it was taken by the Bulgars. It has to be clearly pointed out that Old Bulgar pottery, including pottery with burnished decoration, has been found at

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4 Both cemeteries are Christian ones. The interesting thing in this case is that two out of the three crouched burials are N–S oriented, a fact which again shows the influence of very strong pagan traditions.

5 According to the excavator, the inhumation burials in this cemetery belonged to Slavs converted to Christianity. However, this thesis is not accepted by all specialists (Ангелова 1999, 209).

6 It is a Christian cemetery, although elements of pagan traditions are strongly present.

7 Теофан Изповедник 275–276 (Theophanes the Confessor).

8 Теофан Изповедник 286–287 (Theophanes the Confessor); Теодор Студит (Theodore the Studite) 33, letter № 4 to patrician Theodore – a Bulgar converted to Christianity.

several locations in Plovdiv (Ботушарова 1963a, 62; Морева-Арабова 2001, 104).[9]

In the period of the First Bulgarian Kingdom (Khanate) the territorial expansion of the state was very often accompanied by colonizing of locations of strategic importance. Several and very reliable pieces of information are provided by the sources about the period discussed in the present article. In the early 9th century *kana syubigi* Krum conquered the eastern parts of the Avar Khaganate and the so-called *Gesta Hungarorum* provides information that he populated certain territories with Bulgars and Slavs predominantly, bringing them from the old territories of Bulgaria.[10] In 812 the Bulgars conquered the present-day South Bulgarian Black Sea littoral, deported the subjects of the Byzantine Empire who had been living there and replaced them with a Slavic population (Гюзелев 1981, 331–332; Димитров 1981, 414).[11] It was these Slavs that were mentioned in the third chapter of the peace treaty signed in 816 (Бешевлиев 1992, 166, № 41). Meanwhile, in 815 the Byzantines annihilated a *bivouac* of colonists sent by *kana syubigi* Omurtag near present-day Nessebar[12]. The two pieces of information are related (Dimitrov 1992, 45–46) and they indicate an intentional sending of colonists in the newly conquered territories along the Black Sea littoral in 812–815.[13] St. Vaklinov believes that the conquest of Serdica and the adjacent territories by *kana syubigi* Krum was also followed by purposeful colonization (Ваклинов 1977, 54). In 864 knyaz Boris asked the Byzantines to be ceded territories in Thrace since he was pressured by the growth of the population in his own country that had to be re-settled on new territories (Рашев 1993, 112; Момчилов 2005, 218–219; Борисов 2005, 314; Shejleva 2001, 145–168) and in 904 tsar Simeon threatened the Byzantines that if they did not satisfy some of his demands, he would send colonists to "*settle down*" in Thessaloniki, which at that time had been seized and abandoned by the Arabs.[14] The sources also provide information about purposeful Bulgar colonization in 922 which concerns Viza and the adjacent territories.[15]

Considering the examples mentioned above, we have all grounds to assume that the seizure of Plovdiv in 836 was followed by a similar colonization and the two discovered Bulgar pagan burials are a trace which remained as a result of this process.

Despite being only two, the Bulgar pagan burials found in Plovdiv provide extremely important information. These are the first early medieval pagan burials that have been discovered in the western part of Upper Thrace. Together with the old Bulgar pottery found in the city of Plovdiv they represent an undeniable proof of the ethnic changes which took place there after the city was seized by *kana syubigi* Malamir.

Translated by Tatiana Stefanova

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[9] Детев 1959, 73–74, обр. 102–103; Детев 1976, 133, 135, обр. 70–71; Джамбов 1960, 149–151. This settlement is situated ca. 2 km away from the defensive walls (Въжарова 1958, 590, обр. 10). Regretfully, the information about the provenance of the published jar – the city of Plovdiv or Plovdiv region – is not precise (Ботушарова 1963, 94, 114–115, Pl. XIII–XIV; Морева-Арабова 2001, 101, 104; Топалилов–Станев 2010, 386–388).

[10] Унгарски аноним, 25–26: *"And the territory lying between the Tisza and the Danube was conquered by Kean the Great – the master of Bulgaria, a grandfather of the chieftain Salan, as far as the territories of the Ruthenians and the Polonians and settled down Sclavs and Bulgars there."* and *"... after the death of the King Attila the chieftain Kean the Great, a great grandfather of the chieftain Salan, came from Bulgaria with the help and following the advice of the Emperor of the Greeks, conquered this land; and the Sclavs themselves were taken from the Bulgarian land to the territories of the Ruthenians ..."*.

[11] *"The Suleymankoy inscription provides information about the mass emigration of the local Byzantine population from Eastern Thrace and its replacement with Slavic population by khan Krum in the early 9th century"* (Аладжов 1973, 13).

[12] Продължителят на Теофан, 112; Йосиф Генезий, 323.

[13] Станев 2011, 433–452

[14] Лъв Хиросфакт 184, писмо № 16.

[15] Житие на Св. Мария Нова 77: "*Simeon when arrived in the abandoned Viza, destroyed the survived walls and commanded to plough and sow the land in the vicinity. After settling down some of his people in this town and appointing someone named Vuliya a commander of the fortress, he went away to do the same in the rest of the towns in Thrace as well.*"

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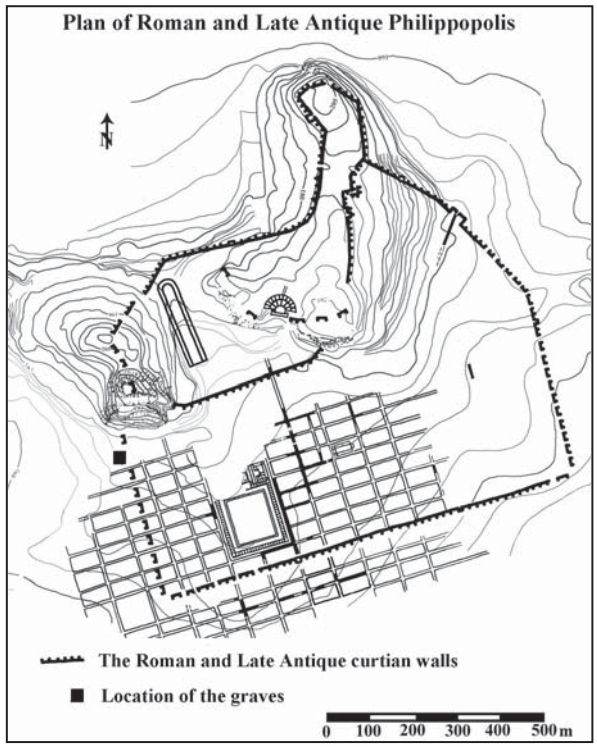

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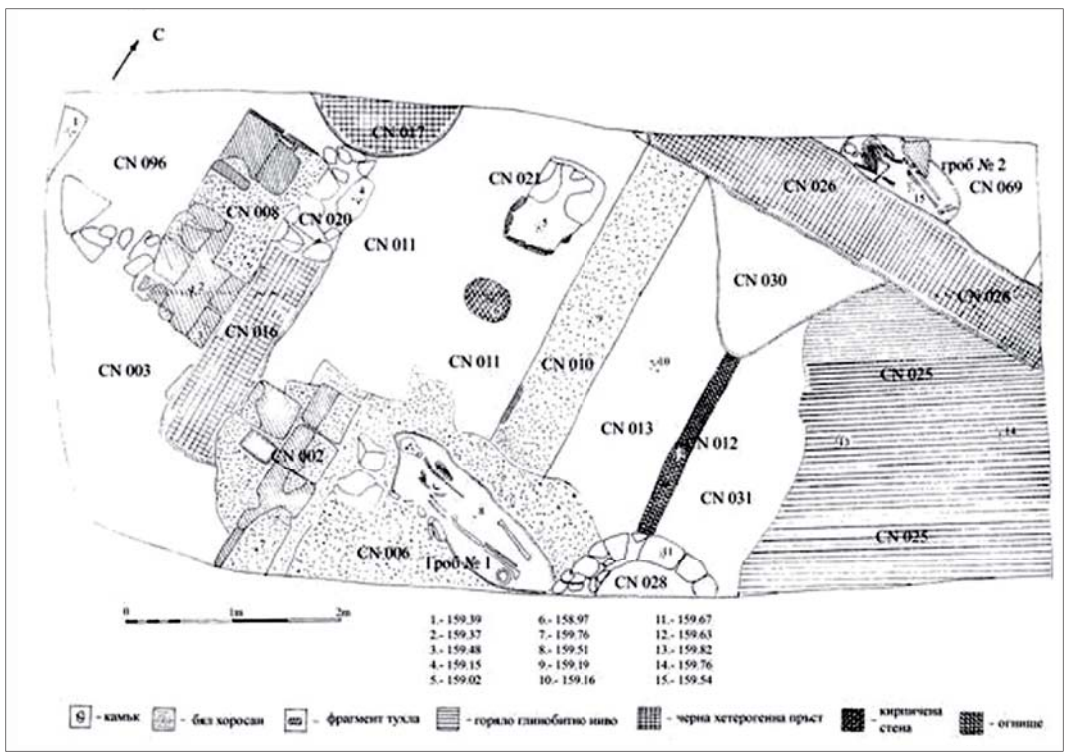

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Fig. 2: 1: General view of the excavated area, view from the east;
2–3: Plan of the excavated area and the two burials

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Fig. 3: 1: Burial № 1, view from the south; 2: Grave goods in grave pit № 1; 3: Burial № 2, view from the north; 4: Grave goods in grave pit № 2

ABOUT THE CHARACTERS ON JUGS № 2 AND 7 FROM THE NAGYSZENTMIKLÓS TREASURE

Nikolai Markov

The treasure was found accidentally in 1799 during agricultural works near the village of Nagyszentmiklós, in the Banat region (present-day Sânnicolau Mare, Rumania). Its exquisiteness and unusual representations, however, continue to excite the visitors of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, where it is now on display (*Fig. 1. 1*). The Nagyszentmiklós treasure was deposited in the ground at circa 1.5 m depth and consisted of 23 gold vessels with a total weight of 9.945 kg. The curious fact is that the unsolved problems concerning the treasure exceed those on which researchers have reached consensus. More than 200 years after it was uncovered no commonly accepted hypotheses exist helping the examiners find answers to such questions as when and where the vessels were made, when they were buried in the ground and who were the people to whose cultural traditions the treasure should be attributed to.[1]

The brief work I now present to the reader does not offer a review of the abundant literature on this remarkable early medieval treasure, nor does it suggest a new hypothesis pretending to answer the above-formulated questions. My goal is rather unassuming, namely to draw attention to an aspect of the representations on the vessels underestimated and disregarded until now; to be more specific, the scenes represented on the two jugs, № 2 and 7 (*Fig. 1. 2*).[2] The efforts for "*rational reasoning*" (Bálint 2002, 75) in "*decoding*" this extremely intriguing matter have in many cases brought European researchers to more or less ungrounded interpretations. It would be sufficient here to quote the following "*masterpiece*": "*all the ornaments on the vessels are spectacular, but only ornamental without any symbolic content*" as the Hungarian colleague Cs. Bálint wrote a few years ago (Bálint 2002). This conclusion, completely deficient of historical judgment, reveals a certain disregarding of the principles on which art was based in those "*times of spirituality*" and is obviously intended to serve the premeditated scholarly theses of the Hungarian colleagues aimed at providing evidence for the Avar origin of the Nagyszentmiklós treasure. In his work, Cs. Bálint continues that "*the owners and the contemporary viewers of the treasure translated the foreign depiction types through the filter of their own cultural tradition*" (Bálint 2002, 77). Concerning the parallels of these "*foreign depiction types*", he gathers his arguments from the art of Byzantium, Central Asia, Sasanian Persia and elsewhere; relying on the parallels thus collected, he makes the assumption that "*The treasure reflects a mixture of several cultures, beside the evident Avar links, there is an object that, together with the undeniable Byzantine trait contains Central Asian features (no. 2), while another object produced using techniques favored by Byzantine goldsmiths, shows affinity with Western European finds from the 10th–11th centuries (no. 19). This specific composition could have come into being only in one place: the Carpatian Basin. The Nagyszentmiklós treasure is exlusive product of Avar goldsmiths from the 7th–8th centuries* (Bálint 2002, 74)*, while the Byzantine affinities should be handled and explained by the contacts which Avar material culture had with the Byzantine world*."

Unfortunately, the situation is not much different in Bulgaria. The still "*modern*" interpretations of the scenes, suggested by N. Mavrodinov in the remote 1943 (Mavrodinov 1943) even then met the sufficiently relevant rebuff by D. Dimitrov in his remarkable work published just a few years later (Димитров 1948, 338–414).[3] I think it strange that, in spite of D. Dimitrov's serious argumentation as to the Sassanid character of the two vessels, the ideas suggested by N. Mavrodinov about the "*Danubian-Proto Bulgar origin*" of the jugs (and the scenes on them) encounter an almost unreserved acceptance even nowadays. For example, in the latest work on the treasure we read that we can see on jug № 2 the representation of "*a victorious*

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1 The existing hypotheses concerning these questions were compiled and well-represented in the latest complex research on the treasure, prepared by the colleagues from the Hungarian National Museum in Budapest (Garam 2002); in Bulgarian, compiled though somewhat outdated information, see Димитров 1948, 338–414.

2 Although the discussed vessels are familiar from dozens of publications, I use certain illustrative material from the Hungarian edition of The Gold of the Avars (Garam 2002) because of the exceedingly high quality of the photographs.

3 In this remarkable study a complete survey was made of all preceding publications concerning the treasure.

ruler-khan" (*Fig. 2. 1*),[4] "*a mythical ancestor and king, born from the sacred animal of the tribe*" (*Fig. 2. 2*),[5] "*an eagle, snatching away in his talons a nude female figure… a version based on elements of the ancient myth of Ganymedes, abducted by Zeus and turned into an eagle… while the woman has the Iranian goddess Anahita as her prototype …"* (*Fig. 2. 3*),[6] "*fight between animals a griffin attacking a doe*" (Вакли нов–Вакли нова 1983, 26–32; *Fig. 2. 4*)[7]; about the scenes on jug № 7 we read that "*the master-goldsmith has put different meaning in the widespread myth of Ganymedes, connecting the myth with fertility cult*" (*Fig. 3. 1*),[8] "*a modified motif from Greek mythology – battle of Centaurs and Lapiths*" (Вакли нов–Вакли нова 1983, 46–48; *Fig. 3. 2*).[9]

The article by O. Minaeva (Минаева 1988), published soon after the above-mentioned review, does not offer a new reading of the representations; however, the author gives once more the "*Sasanian*" hypothesis a push when speaking about the origin of at least several vessels from the treasure. Regretfully, her article now as D. Dimitrov's work before was completely ignored by the scholarly circles as they resumed the old understanding of the scenes: "*Abduction in the sky*" (the scene on jug № 2, "*a woman raised by an eagle*" and the scene on jug № 7 "a youth raised up by an eagle"), "*fighting animals*" (the scene on jug № 2 "a griffin attacking a doe"), "*a ruler-victor*" (the scene from jug № 2 "*an equestrian dragging a captive by the hair*") and "unique periphrasis of a Sasanian figurative type" (the scene from jug № 2 "*a ruler, riding a winged mythical creature and shooting an arrow against the attacking lion*") (Bálint 2002, 75–77).

These explanations, ill-grounded and striking with their formality, are as I have already mentioned, of obviously intentional nature. I admit that our Hungarian colleagues might have not read O. Minaeva's article because it was published in Bulgarian only. I am convinced, however, that they are well-acquainted with the works of K. Trever[10] and B. Maršak (Marschak 1986, 308–316)[11] who not only have no doubts about the Sasanian character of the scenes under consideration (and of the vessels), but they also identify some of the represented characters. For instance, it was K. Trever who first suggested that the female figure from the scene "*a woman, raised up by an eagle*" (*Fig. 3. 3*)[12] on jug № 2 should be seen as a representation of Anahita (Ardvi Sura Anahita), the ancient Indo-Persian Great Goddess of waters, well-known from the Avesta and other Zoroastrian religious texts.[13] There is no complete correspondence between the sacred Zoroastrian texts that have survived till modern times (even the Avesta familiar in three versions is considered to have been preserved in just about 1/3 of its original size). Having this in mind, K. Trever admits that the scene most probably depicts a partially lost myth,[14] according to which Anahita, the goddess-patron of the Sasanian rulers' dynasty – the

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4 The scene from jug № 2 has been for scores of years interpreted by the scholars as depicting a triumphant Bulgarian Khan, victorious Avar combatant, Khazar warrior or simply as a nomad ruler – interpretations completely dependent on the researchers' partialities.

5 In 1986 the characters in this scene jug № 2 were interpreted for the first time as a pictorial story about the mythic Persian ruler Tahmuras who defeated the evil demon Ahriman by magic. For a period of 30 years Tahmuras had been riding Ahriman and destroying the demons throughout the worl.

6 The attempt to interpret this scene jug № 2 in the context of Greco-Roman mythology brought a number of scholars to the conclusion that its prototype should be identified as the myth of Ganymedes abducted to Olympus by the eagle-shaped Zeus. In 1937, K. Trever, the Russian researcher in Central-Asiatic art, first suggested the scene to be explained by an episode from the myths connected with the Persian goddess Anahita.

7 This scene from jug № 2 has always remained in the shadow of the other scenes represented on the same vessel because it is seen on various art objects of many nations. There were even attempts for the scene to be bound to certain concepts of struggle between calendar seasons.

8 This scene from jug № 7 has most often been interpreted as a paraphrase of the myth about Ganymedes being kidnapped by Zeus to Olympus.

9 To identify the characters on jug № 7 the European scholars inevitably turned to the Greco-Roman mythological representations – this explains why the most frequently recognized mythological motif in the scene was the modified narrative of the "battle of Centaurs and Lapiths".

10 See for example Тревер–Луконин 1987, 89. K. Trever represented his attitude in one of his earliest works on the vessel from Cherdin (Орбели–Тревер 1935, 12–14).

11 Looking for parallels that may help in the interpretation of this scene on the Cherdin vessel, K. Trever refers to the similar representation on jug № 2 from the Nagyszentmiklós treasure (Тревер 1937).

12 Looking for parallels that may help in the interpretation of this scene on the Cherdin vessel, K. Trever refers to the similar representation on jug № 2 from the Nagyszentmiklós treasure (Тревер 1937).

13 On Ardvi Sura Anahita see details in Dhalla 1994, 225–229.

14 Reminiscences of it survived in the Avestian "Ardvisura-yasht" (familiar also as "Aban-yasht" XVI. 60–66; see in Брагинский 1973, 402).

great celestial river, the Great Goddess of Waters and Vegetation,[15] disguised as a beautiful girl, is helping the boatman Paurva (in Darmesteter's translation "*old Vafra Navâza*"[16]), whom the hero Traitaunas (Fereydun) had turned into a hawk, to return home safe and sound.

It seems possible, however, that the scene in question may not reproduce a definite mythical narrative, but may possess certain allegorical value. The conceptual identification/equalization of the powerful flying bird of prey with the God of Thunderbolt (in ancient Iran that was Ahura Mazda, Ormazd; Darmesteter 1877, 33–34) is well known from the mythologies of all Indo-European peoples. In Greco-Roman mythology, the eagle is Zeus-Jupiter Brontios (Thunderer)'s aide; in Indian mythology, Indra himself in the body of a hawk storms the skies to fetch the sacred Soma. A certain "*hawk with a gold collar*"[17] is mentioned in the Avestan texts, who might be an incarnation of the Supreme God of Ormazd.[18] Again, mighty birds take the holy Haoma to the Mount Hara (Hugar) in the Proto-Indian myths (Darmesteter 1877, 189). But does not the great celestial river Ardvi Sura Anahita spring from that same world mountain, where the Sun, the Moon and the stars rise (Darmesteter 1877, 139–140).[19] In the Avesta, the lightning *Atar* was born both in the sky and in the waters of the storm – it is Apam Napat, *the Son of the Waters* (Darmesteter 1877, 34–35). Interpreted this way, the scene under consideration appears to be a synthesis of the two greatest goods of life – light and water; these two best things on Earth are continuously fought for by the Forces of Good and Evil (Darmesteter 1877, 97–107). Actually, the scene is an apotheosis/glorification of the triumph of the Forces of Water (Anahita) and Light (*the gold-collared hawk*) over the Forces of Evil. This probable interpretation of the scene is supported by the other three representations on jug № 2.

I will resume "*decoding*" the scenes with the next one, which according to B. Marschak can be considered obvious and easily readable. The representation displays a "*ruler, riding a winged mythical creature and shooting an arrow against an attacking lion*". As stated by this remarkable authority on Central Asian toreutics, "*Tahmuras and Ahriman can easily be identified*" (Marschak 1986, 312) in this picture. I cannot but accept B. Marschak's undoubtedly felicitous identification. It is backed up by a number of Zoroastrian texts[20] and the familiar verses from Ferdowsi's Shah-namah[21] referring to the mythical Persian ruler (in the Avesta Tahma-Urupi/Urupa=Tahmuras in the Shah-namah) who defeated the Evil Lord Ahriman by magic, turned him into a saddle-animal and rode his opponent during the 30 years of his reign wandering round the world and destroying demons.[22] Some completely identical Sasanian images, representing the same scene, speak in favor of such a reading. As an example I indicate the representations on a Sasanian green glass medallion (diam. 3.1 cm) incorrectly interpreted by the experts of Gerhard Hirsch Auction House as an "*Archer with a bow riding a winged horse and hunting for lions*" (*Fig. 3. 5*).[23] The parallel reading of the two scenes, the representation on the glass medallion and that on jug № 2 from the Nagyszentmiklós treasure, is striking. The image is too well-known to need describing. Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that it is most certainly based on the "*hunting scenes*" familiar from dozens of Sasanian art works, where Sasanian rulers (easily recognized by their royal crowns) are featured hunting for lions, gazelles and boars (*Figs. 3. 4, 6*).[24] Although

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15 The characteristics of Anahita are developed in detail Луконин 1969, 97, 120.

16 V. Âbân yast. XVI. 60–66 (Müller 1883, 68).

17 XVI. Dîn yast. IV. 13 (Müller 1883, 267).

18 The falcon on the Cherdin vessel is represented wearing a collar round the neck (see *Fig. 3. 2*).

19 See also Чунакова 1997, 299.

20 See in XIX. Zamyâd yast. V–VI. 26–29. (müller 1883, 292); dadestan ī menog ī xrad (Judgments of the Spirit of Wisdom). XVIII. 21–23 (Чунакова 1997, 101).

21 See Фирдоуси 1964, 48.

22 On Tahma-Urupi/Urupa (Tahmuras) see Darmesteter 1877, 165–168. More details on the Persian myth again (Darmesteter 1877, 168), with comments concerning the cosmogonic symbolic values of the scene.

23 Gerhard Hirsch. Auktion 238 am 16 Februar 2005. München, Taf. XXXIII. № 507. Naturally, the authenticity of this extremely interesting object could be confirmed solely by the dealers of the auction sale. I do not know who its present owner is.

24 Partially gilt silver vessel from the Hermitage collections (*Fig. 3. 4*). The hunter in the hunting scene represented on the vessel is identified as Shapur II, the Sasanian King of Kings. The composition of the representation is similar to a scene on jug № 2 from the Nagyszentmiklós treasure. It also resembles other hunting scenes familiar from at least several vessels of indisputable Sasanian origin. On an 8th century silver dish with gilt from the Hermitage collections a hunting Persian nobleman is represented (*Fig. 3. 6*). His carriage reminds very much of the posture of the "hunter" on jug № 2 from the Nagyszentmiklós treasure. A curious element of this scene is a detail from the horse trappings – a human head-shaped pendant. A similar decoration may be seen in the Dumbarton Oaks collections. The Dumbarton Oaks pendant was published in 1962 by M. Ross in the first volume of his fundamental work on the Byzantine and Early Medieval objects in this collection (Ross 1962, Pl. XXI. № 18).

the meaning of these scenes is still an area under abating discussion, it is almost generally accepted nowadays that they should be decoded as an expression of the triumph of Good over Evil, the basic concept in Zoroastrianism, acknowledged as the official religion in the Sasanian Empire. The scene represented on jug № 2 does not contradict such an interpretation. Quite the opposite, because of the obvious connotation in the epic story about Tahmuras such an opinion may be considered only confirming its conceptual correctness.

The flaming crown of Tahmuras also requires a more detailed explanation. It is a long established fact that every Sassanid king of the kings wore a crown, which, despite the common Zoroastrian symbolism of its separate components (Луконин 1969, 23–24, 46–48) was specially designed for him. For instance, in the crown of Shapur I (241–272) a cog-wheel crown was added alongside with the symbols of Ahura Mazda, commonly accepted since the Achaemenid Period in Iran. In the crown of the next ruler, Bahram I (273–276), the cog-wheel element was replaced with a radiating crown – a symbol of Mithra; in the crown of Narseh (293–302) we see twigs, the symbol of Anahita; the raven's wings and head in the crown of Hormisda II (302–310) symbolize Veretragna, the genius of victory; in the crown of Shapur II (310–379) the cog-wheel element resumed its previous place as in Shapur I's crown but this time flames were added, the flames being represented in a manner identical with the way the flames were featured in Tahmuras's crown from the scene under consideration; the major symbol in the crown of Peroz I (457–484) is that of the Moon deity Ma/Mao, etc. (*Fig. 4. 1*). Naturally, none of these "*personal*" crowns could be represented on the head of a legendary ruler like Tahmuras. Obviously, the personification was carried out by a Zoroastrian master because the crown of that mythic Iranian ruler, without doubt the greatest demon-fighter, was represented flaming, an easily recognizable symbol of fire-worship (Zoroastrianism). As to the crown of the other character in the scene, the evil Ahriman, I can offer no acceptable reading at present.

B. Marschak believes that the third, especially interesting scene, the one with "*the victorious ruler*", should also be interpreted as an illustration of a "*typical Iranian tale – Rostam with the captured Aulad/Olad and the head of Arshlang, hanging from his saddle*."

Here is the story from Ferdowsi's Shah-namah in brief (according ZIMMERN 1883, 87–115). While rescuing his sovereign, the powerful ruler Kay Kavus, who had been captured by the White Dev (Demon) in the Mazandaran campaign, Rostam on his legendary stallion Raksh performed seven labors: killed a ferocious lion, a dragon-ejderha, and a witch, found a life-saving spring, captured the local warlord Olad, slew the Mazandaranian dev, the commander-in-chief Arjang and the White Dev. The characters that most interest us are Rostam's vanquished opponents from the fourth and fifth exploits. In his battle with Olad, Rostam overpowered him and made him his guide in the lands of the White Demon. On their way, Rostam treated Olad as his hostage and all the time asked him questions about the devs' manners. According to the Shah-namah, while Rostam was riding Raksh, Olad was careering behind; they were "*as quick as the wind*" until they reached Mazandaran and the place where the devs (demons) had imprisoned his sovereign Kay Kavus. To prevent Olad from attempting an escape, Rostam tied him to a tree and clutching at Sam's mace (the mace with the bull's head), set off for the military camp of the devs. In the night, Rostam fought a duel with Arjang, the chieftain of the rival demons' troops and killed him. Then he cut off his head and hung it from the saddlebow of his horse as a sign of his glorious victory.[25] On the next day, the devs' army, weakened because of Arjang's death, was easily destroyed. Having thus overcome his enemies, Rostam returned for Olad and took his hostage to the town where Kay Kavus was waiting for his savior. After Kay Kavus was rescued, Rostam wished that Olad should receive the crown of Mazandaran.

As is seen from that story, B. Marschak's optional identification of the characters represented on jug № 2 seems acceptable as well, in spite of certain reservations. In the Iranian epic tales and miniatures illustrating them (although the latter were in the greater part created rather late, in 14th–19th century), Arjang (=Arshlang) is traditionally represented as an ugly demon of monstrous appearance, while the highwayman Aulad (= Olad) is naturally of human looks. Besides, the images of the two defeated characters from jug № 2 are depicted in an identical way, with a strong intention to complete uniformity. Both men are middle-aged, with short hair, both wear long drooping moustaches and

[25] It is worth mentioning that the custom had survived for centuries on end among Central Asiatic nations. Here is what F.F. Tornau, a Russian officer in the Caucasian war in 1832 called to his mind from the campaign against the Chechens: *"The Tatars fasten to the rear straps of the saddle the chopped heads of their enemies, they take no captives..."* (ТОРНАУ 2000, 239).

wedge-shaped beards, average long. This sameness apparently permits the identification of the characters from the scene on jug № 2 with other heroes of the Iranian epos. In my opinion, the most appropriate candidates appear to be the brothers Tur and Salm (Sarm), defeated by their nephew Manoushchehr (Manouchehr, Manoushchitra) who avenged the death of Eraj (Irij), his father and their brother (Christensen 1996, 13–14).[26]

Manouchehr (the first Iranian ruler, according to some mythic versions) occupies a very special place in Zoroastrian ideology/concepts. They believe that Zoroaster (Zarathushtra, Zartosht) himself is a descendant of Manouchehr's lineage (Чунакова 1997, 309). That is why all Persian *mobed*s (Zoroastrian priests) are said to have come from that line (Чунакова 1997, 309). The myths say that Manouchehr was a grandson of the legendary Fereydun (Traitaunas, Fredon), who was bereft of his immortality by the evil demon Ahriman (Dhalla 1994, 394). In his lifetime, Fereydun allocated his kingdom to his three sons Salm, Tur and Eraj. Salm received the western lands, Tur the northern and Eraj, his youngest and favored son, inherited the best part of the kingdom, namely Iran. These three princes are the eponyms of three ancient peoples that were mentioned even in the rather old Yasht 13: Sarimah (the Sarmatians?), Tura (the Turanians) and Arian (the Iranians).[27] Frustrated by this allocation of the lands, Salm and Tur conspired against Eraj and fought him. They defeated him and Tur cut off his head and sent it to their father Fereydun.[28] Years later, Fereydun sent an army, headed by Manouchehr, Eraj's son to avenge his father's death. Justice triumphed. Manouchehr overpowered Tur and stabbed him with his spear, severed his head and sent it to Fereydun. The terrified Salm asked the dev (demon) Kakoui for help. Regardless of the mighty support, Manuchehr, who fought for a fair cause, won the battle again. The severed head of Salm was first impaled on a spear, and then was sent to Fereydun (Zimmern 1883, 22).

Although some elements of this Iranian mythological tale (for instance, the obvious resemblance in the heads of the defeated enemies and the spear with which the exploit was performed) partially explain the images on jug № 2, the myth does not completely correspond to it. We should not exclude the probability that the discussed scene was based on certain unfamiliar versions of the mentioned myths.

These legendary characters were reproduced in the plastic art of Central Asia in the early Islamic centuries as well – at the very least one analogue of this scene has survived till nowadays. Again, B. Marschak mentioned this analogue. He saw the same scene on a bronze vessel from the 9th–10th century together with some other contexture (Bahram Gur and Azade, eagle, woman, two lions and two gazelles) (Marschak 1986, 312). To my disappointment, my endeavors to find published illustrations of this vessel failed completely.

Before proceeding to the next composition on jug № 2, I think it necessary to consider in brief the issue of "*beheading*". There exist numerous myths about cut-off heads and even about miracles performed by such heads in almost all Eurasian peoples but it seems that decapitation of the enemy had a very special significance for the inhabitants of Sasanian Persia. Cut-off heads were sent as gift not only to rulers, but were also used in Zoroastrian ritual practices. For example, in worshipping Anahita, the goddess-patroness of the Sasanian dynasty, a tradition was established which required that cut-off heads should be sent to her temple: "*…After he had murdered not a few (foes) and sent their heads into Anahita's temple, he returned from Merv to Pars...*", in these words al-Tabari, a highly influential historian and theologian tells us in his chronicle about the deeds of Ardashir I (224–241), King of Kings (Луконин 1969, 51). In the victorious scene, represented in the rock-sculptures from Tag-e Chowgan valley near the town of Bishapur, right under Shapur II (309–379)'s legs, the figure of a soldier is seen, offering the cut-off head of an enemy (*Fig. 4. 4*).[29]

The fourth scene on jug № 2, in which an eagle-headed griffin assaulting a doe is represented, cannot be related to a definite mythology. We see the same image on objects of Greco-Roman and Near Eastern art since its classical period. Because in this particular case the scene is depicted on an object of no doubt Iranian origin, I am inclined to interpret it as symbolizing the battle between Good and Evil, a basic concept of Zoroastrianism as mentioned before.

Concerning the symmetric representations on jug № 7, D. P. Dimitrov made the following conclusion: "*We are convinced that if jug № 7 had*

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[26] Reminiscences of that myth in: Dadestan ī menog ī xrad (Judgments of the Spirit of Wisdom) XVIII. 21–23 (Чунакова 1997, 98, 102).

[27] On this identification, see Christensen 1996, 13.

[28] See in: Dadestan ī menog ī xrad (Judgments of the Spirit of Wisdom) XVIII. 21–23 (Чунакова 1997, 98).

[29] Lukonin identifies the ruler as Bahram (Varahran) II (Луконин 1969, 99, Fig. 15).

not been found together with the still not deciphered inscription on Boila-Bataul's cup no one would even for a moment have doubted its Iranian origin…" (Димитров 1948, 395). Again, these images find their appropriate explanation through Iranian myths and Zoroastrian religious texts. The scene interpreted by dozens of researchers as *Ganymedes abducted by an eagle*[30] could easily be identified as the legendary Persian hero Zal (Zâlizer), Rostam's father, being carried away atop the Alborz (Elbrus) mountain by the eagle Simurgh (Saêna in the Avesta), the godly bird that had brought him up. The vessel and the twig in Zal's hand could not be other than a vessel with the Haoma, a drink sacred to Zoroastrians, and the holy twig *barsuma*. I am not certain which moment from the relationship between Zal and the Simurgh the scene reproduces. From the Shah-namah we know that the first time the Simurgh carried away the new-born child Zal to his nest; the second time the mythical bird took the young man Zal down on the ground and delivered him to his father Sam; the Simurgh also helped the paladin several times in his labors. However, the most probable interpretation, in my opinion, is that the scene on jug № 7 represents the moment of Zal being taken back to the human world.

Here is a fragment from the Shah-namah, translated by Mohl: *"... he (Simurgh) picked him (Zal) up hovering in the sky and took him to his father. The dustan's hair streamed down his chest; his was the body of an elephant, his cheek like the "rose of spring". When his father saw him, he sighed with grief; then he bent his head before the Simurgh bird and lavished his blessings on him: "Oh, king of the birds, The Creator gave you power, might and virtue, because you are savior of the miserable; your kindness surpasses all judgments. You always show the true face of the evil-doers. Stay that mighty forever!*" The Simurgh went back to the mountain and Sam and his retinue looked after him for a long time without loosing him from their sight (Mohl 1876, 176–177).

In the context of this account, certain elements of the composition of the discussed scene become readable. The youth's nakedness, concealed only by a humble piece of leather round his thighs,[31] seems natural considering the long years spent in the bird's nest and in the company of the Simurgh's nestlings. The objects, offered to the bird by the youth, are the vessel of Haoma, sacred to Zoroastrians, and the *barsuma* twig, by means of which devs, demons and witches could be overpowered (Чунакова 1997, 117). The two holy objects serve to emphasize the divine nature of the Simurgh. It is curious to know that the Simurgh bird, one of the favorite characters in the Iranian epos, helps other heroes as well, shifting them from place to place. For example, in the tale about Gjul and Sanoubar, the Simurgh carries the hero to the *peri*-girl's palace and then he shifts the *peri* to the Kaf Mountain (Приказки 1995, 194–195). Another curious feature worth noticing is that all characters in the different scenes on the indicated jug have the same collars around the neck, perhaps representing them as supreme beings.[32]

Of particular interest are the images on the narrow (side) walls of the jug – young men, riding centaur-like creatures as a sign of their subordinance. The representations are symmetrical, as are the central medallions, and repeat the same images. Since the representations are fairly familiar, I think their description superfluous. They have been until now described as "*motif borrowed and modified from Greek mythology – battle of Centaurs and Lapiths*" (Ваклинов–Ваклинова 1983, 48) and "*battle of Centaurs and Humans*" (Kovács 2002, 24–25) attributions I consider entirely inacceptable for the following reasons: firstly, the representations from the Nagyszentmiklós jug are not battle scenes, they are no doubt expression of triumph, of Good's triumphal victory over Evil. (This interpretation does not even need arguments in its defence; it is enough to consider the characters' poses.) Secondly, both representations follow the conceptual pattern of the scene from jug № 2, illustrating Tahmuras's victory over Ahriman. (Again, this scene needs no argumentation; unprejudiced, even formal comparison between the two scenes is sufficient). The question that remains to be answered is about the identification of the characters, featured in this manner. Again, Iranian mythology helps in solving this problem with great probability. The key of my identification are the objects in the hands of the victors over the demons. In the first case (the upper scene) it is a twig, thick with leaves, and in the second (the lower scene) it is an arc-shaped curved object, both its ends terminating with a leaf, its upper part shaped like a wavy line, giving the idea of foaming, undulating water.

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30 Concerning this identification see Gscwantler 2002, 24; also Ваклинов–Ваклинова 1983, 11, 46.

31 About this piece of leather scarcely concealing the youth's nakedness, see again the Shah-namah: *"instead of silk dress he has leather to wrap up"* (Mohl 1876, 181).

32 The Sasanian "Kings of Kings" wore collars as insignia of royalty (Луконин 1969, 155).

To the people of Central Asia, the territory of which includes large desolate and half-desert arid areas, vegetation and water have always been of particular value. Actually, the latter were perceived as the basis of life. Consequently, in Iranian mythology these two basic elements of life have their specialized patrons – the deities Haurvatât and Ameretât,[33] featured as an inseparable couple.[34]According to the myths, these two deities belong to the seven supreme divinities, Amesha-spentas.[35] In Zoroastrian religion, the Amesha-spentas are thought of as moral and physical abstractions, divine concepts, with Haurvatât primarily symbolizing health and Ameretât – longevity (Darmesteter 1877, 42) as their characteristics developed they began to be perceived as patrons of vegetation and of water, respectively. To the Indo-Europeans, at least, these were the two greatest valuables in the world therefore since the remotest past until now they have always wished each other "*health and long life*". The Iranian fundamental concept of symmetry in world organization, and accordingly, in the battle of Good and Evil, underlies every existence; for that reason both Haurvatât and Ameretât had their personal opponents – the demonic creatures Târîc (Tarev) and Zârîc (Zarev). These two demons, created by Ahriman in his battle with Ormazd, were instruments of "*destruction*", "*old age*", "*starvation*" and "*thirst*". The Avestan and Zoroastrian texts not infrequently describe the victory of Haurvatât and Ameretât over Târîc and Zârîc.[36] For instance, in Yasht 19, the battle of the Amesha-spentas is told like this: "*Haurvatât and Ameretât will destroy both hunger and thirst; Haurvatât and Ameretât will strike down the demonical hunger and the demonical thirst...*".[37]

The identification of the characters in the two scenes as the Iranian divinities and demon fighters Haurvatât and Ameretât, patrons of plants and water, explains the abundance of winding foliage in the background against which these glorious victors are depicted.

No less interesting are the representations (again symmetrical) on the neck of the vessel. The characters belong to both the animal and vegetation kingdoms – herons carrying frogs in their long beaks and branchy trees in leaf with beaming wreaths encircling the separate leaves (*Fig. 4. 2*). The interpretation of this scene which is practically the same seems possible again according to Zoroastrian texts. It seems to me that the main image here is the tree. The tree is not only the central representation and focus of the picture; it also makes an impression with the way its leaves were designed – being enclosed in nimbi they suggest the idea of an illuminated, sacred tree,[38] of light streaming from it.[39] This tree could not be but the "*king of the plants*", the mighty, life-giving Gokirn (Gaokerena) tree, growing in the celestial sea Vouru-kasha,[40] Here is the Bundahishn (the Creation) narrative concerning the frog: "*…the first day, when the tree they call Gaokerena grew in the deep mud within the wide-foamed ocean Frahvkard* (Vourukasha in Darmesteter[41]); *it is necessary as producing renovation of the universe, for they prepare the immortality (i.e. haoma) there from ... The evil spirit has formed therein a frog as an opponent in that deep water, so that it may injure the Haoma*"… Furthermore: "*…the frog is the biggest among the creatures of the Evil spirit*" (Чунакова 1997, 289–290). Without a single exception, in all Zoroastrian texts

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33 Regretfully, the Avestian texts concerning the two deities may be considered lost. Yet, while the yasht on Ameretât is absolutely unfamiliar, certain fragments from the yasht on Haurvatât survived (Darmesteter 1875, 21).

34 See the remarkable work by J. Darmesteter (Darmesteter 1875, 91). They were perceived as a separate couple by the rest of the ameshaspentas, as they were the only ones who implied material concepts (Darmesteter 1875, 68); also see (Darmesteter 1875, 12–14).

35 Ormazd, the Creator and Ruler of the world, occupies the highest position in the divine hierarchy. Immediately under him come the six "divine sparks" of Ormazd, six deities, each representing and ruling one facet of the Creation: Bahman – of all animals with a particular stress on cattle; Ardibehesht – of fire; Sharever – of metals; Sapendarmat – of earth, Haurvatât and Ameretât – of waters and plants. On their creation, see Чунакова 1997, 268. See also Darmesteter 1877, 114–118.

36 Some texts represent Haurvatât and Ameretât as equestrians although the context is not quite clear (Darmesteter 1875, 26–27).

37 XIX. Zamyâd yast. XVI. 96 (Müller 1883, 308)

38 On nimbi in ancient art and on their symbolism see details Стефани 1863, 196 (on supernatural radiance, marked by a nimbus: Стефани 1863, 16; on the nimbus indicating the sky as the scene of action: Стефани 1863, 132–133; the nimbus as an attribute of royalty: Стефани 1863, 180, 187; the influence of Greco-Roman art on the earliest representations of nimbi and radiant wreaths: Стефани 1863, 127).

39 "Light pours and streams into the sea Vouru-kasha" (the concept of hvareno, khwarrah or farr – light of sovereignty, Divine Glory, but is Gaokerena not the King of plants: Darmesteter 1877, 103).

40 More Darmesteter 1875, 52–55, 77.

41 See also the slightly different translation of this paragraph from Bundahishn Darmesteter 1877, 178.

known to me, the frog is a symbol of evil. According to some interpretations, the frog even incarnates the very legendary Avestan demon (Darmesteter 1877, 178–179). Namely for this evil-inflicting role, the frog in the discussed scene is featured as defeated by the heron, i.e. again we see the triumphant Good that overcomes Evil (implied by the frog[42]). Indeed, in the Zoroastrian myths, the undisputed defenders of the cosmic tree Gaokerena from the frogs' attempts were the ten Kar fishes, created by Ormazd, which "*…at all times continually circle around the Haoma, so that the head of one of those fish is continually towards the frog*" (Чунакова 1997, 290; Darmesteter 1877, 178). But is not the heron (Botaurus)[43] the generally recognized frog-destroyer? Further in the same text we read that "*… all animals and birds are created* (by Ormazd NB) *as adversaries of the evil creatures…*" (Чунакова 1997, 292–293) Or "*…of all animals, the birds and the fish are created as adversaries of the harmful creatures*" (Чунакова 1997, 293).

As to the Haoma, the immortality tree and the drink of everlasting life prepared from its seeds, the myths are exceedingly lavish. In the visions, commonly accepted, the Haoma grew in the heavenly sea Vourukasha and all the other plants originated from its seeds. The tree was encircled by other ten thousand plants; each of them possessed healing power; thus it was capable to oppose the ten thousand illnesses sent by the evil Ahriman to the people (Чунакова 1997, 289–290).[44] They also believed that a terrestrial Haoma corresponded to the celestial tree Haoma. The divine Haoma tree was white and the earthly Haoma yellow. Ahura-Mazda (Ormazd) sent the terrestrial Haoma (as well as the other plants) to Thrita, the first man healer. The elixir of immortality, however, could be prepared only from the celestial Haoma. Actually, the earthly Haoma was considered only a shadow, a resemblance of the heavenly one (Darmesteter 1875, 71–72, 77).

I shall interpret none of the other legendary creatures from the Nagyszentmiklós treasure as the uncertainty of their identification is considerable. The "*slippery soil*" under the feet of every examiner in this field has its roots in the abundance of similar, comparable characters. For instance, the bull-shaped bowls № 13 and 14 (on canine paws?) may be interpreted as the living being first created – the "*sole-created ox*" Hadhayoush (Sarsaok), usually described as bull, who carried the heavenly fires; on his back the men in primeval times passed from region (keshwar) (Чунакова 1997, 281, 286–287, 288–289, 291–292) to region across the sea Vourukasha. Or the vessels may represent Sarsaok's descendants – the first bull and the first cow (Чунакова 1997, 281), "*the black bull with yellow knees*" (Чунакова 1997, 299) etc. The bulls represented on Mithra's cross-staffs and the staffs used by Zoroastrian priests may also serve as possible parallels. The striking winged creatures may be identified as the bird-dog Chamrosh (Чунакова 1997, 292, 300, 303 and foll), described as having the body of a dog and the head and wings of a bird, "the three-fingered" bird Sen (Чунакова 1997, 300), the first of all birds, the speaking Karshipt (Чунакова 1997, 292), the Senmurw bird (Чунакова 1997, 283). The griffins may be recognized as the griffin Karkas (Чунакова 1997, 283, 292), often mentioned in Zoroastrian texts or the well-known Simurgh and Ankha from Arabian myths, composite mythic beings of dog, lion, peacock, while the eagle-headed griffins might be representations of Haoma, again a hybrid of eagle and lion, etc.

In brief, the scenes on jugs № 2 and 7 are so obviously of Zoroastrian nature that the question of the place of their production cannot but be raised

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[42] In the English edition of the Bundahishn the pahlavi term "vazagh" is translated by "lizard". For the reasons of such translation see Pahlavi Texts, translated by E. W. West. Part. I. Oxford 1880, 65. note. 3.

[43] I wonder if this is not the animal mentioned in Bundahishn as a "fish-bull". Or maybe it is a wrong interpretation? *("О быке-рыбе говорят, что она плавает („бывает") по всем морям, и когда она кричит, все рыбы беременеют, а все водяные вредные твари выкидывают (своих) детенышей."* (Чунакова 1997, 292); compare with the English version: *"17. Regarding the ox-fish they say, that it exists in all seas; when it utters a cry all fish become pregnant, and all noxious water-creatures cast their young"* (Müller 1880, Ch. XIX., 71). Here are my arguments for this suggestion: 1. It seems to me that this "fish" is mentioned in the wrong context – it fits neither in the paragraphs where only birds are described (the cited fragment) nor in those concerned with bulls (Чунакова 1997, 282); 2. Still, fish does not "cry"; 3. The name of this particular genus of these bitterns, the wading heron, means "a big water bull" in almost all European languages; 4. The heron genus referred to was called Botaurus even in the Middle Ages (or maybe earlier), namely because of the specific scream of that bird, much resembling the bellow of a bull. (See the description by Johanes de Cuba, where this very specific cry is emphasized: Johanes de Cuba – Hortus sanitatis, issued for the first time in 1475 and published in French around 1500: Jean de Cuba – Jardin de santé. Deuxième traité: Des oiseaux. Ch. XVII De buteo, butorio et botauro Butors. Et Ch. LXXXVI. De onocrocolo). Probably this particular characteristic of the bird explains why in Bundahishn it is mentioned in the contexts of both the birds and the familiar "15 species of bulls".

[44] Vendidad. Fargard XX. 1–4 (Müller 1880, 220–221), also Darmesteter 1875, 48, 52, 55–56.

again. In my opinion at least, they were made for or by people confessing fire-worshipping, people who were more or less heirs of the ancient Iranian cultural tradition. Regretfully, the absence of reliably dated and comparable artefacts and images means that the time when the vessels from the treasure were produced very probably will not be soon determined precisely – such objects could have been made even several centuries after the collapse of the Sasanian Kingdom (642) as the Arabian conquerors imposed Islam carefully and gradually, at the same time adopting much from the culture of the conquered population, a heritage they carried through the centuries. As to the inscriptions and the evident Christian symbols, engraved on some of the vessels as it seems subsequently, they testify to the long life of the objects and that they were in use by people confessing Christianity. Contemporary investigations have not yet explained why so many obviously Iranian features (Протич 1927, 211–235; Бешевлиев 1967, 237–247; Чобанов 2006, 94. etc.) are recognizable in the debris of the history of the Bulgarians, lead by Asparukh to their Danubian homeland, but most certainly those people could have been the best claimants if not for the production of this remarkable early medieval treasure, at least for its further service.

Translated by Tsveta Raichevska

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Fig. 1: 1: The Nagyszentmiklós treasure is one of the most remarkable Early Medieval treasures, found in Europe; 2: The characters represented on jugs № 2 and 7 are still of problematical identification

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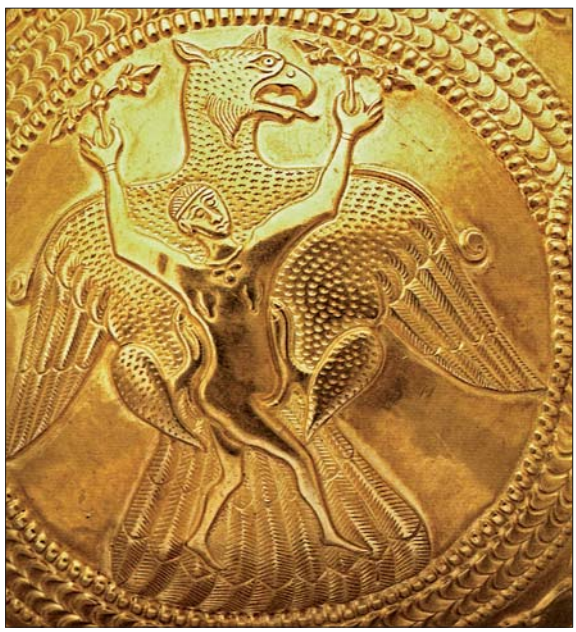

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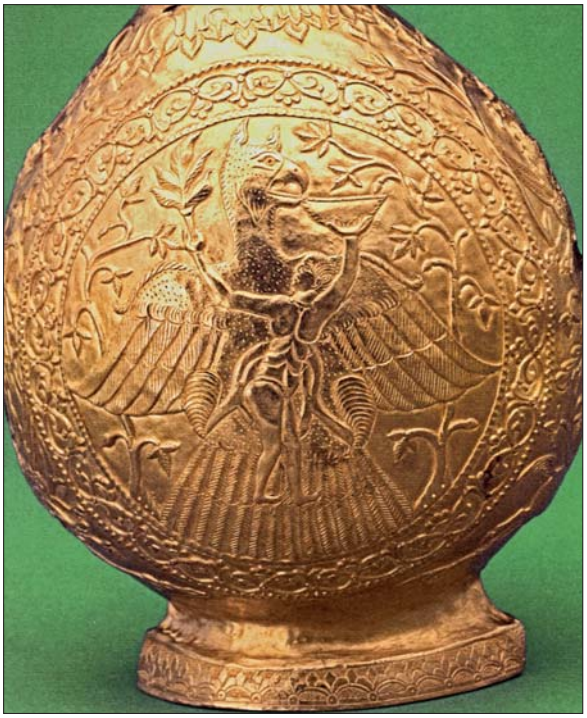
Fig. 2: 1: "A victorious ruler-khan"scene from jug № 2; 2: "A mythical ancestor and king, born from the sacred animal of the tribe" scene from jug № 2; 3: "An eagle, snatching away in his talons a nude female figure" scene from jug № 2; 4: "Fight between animals a griffin attacking a doe" scene from jug № 2



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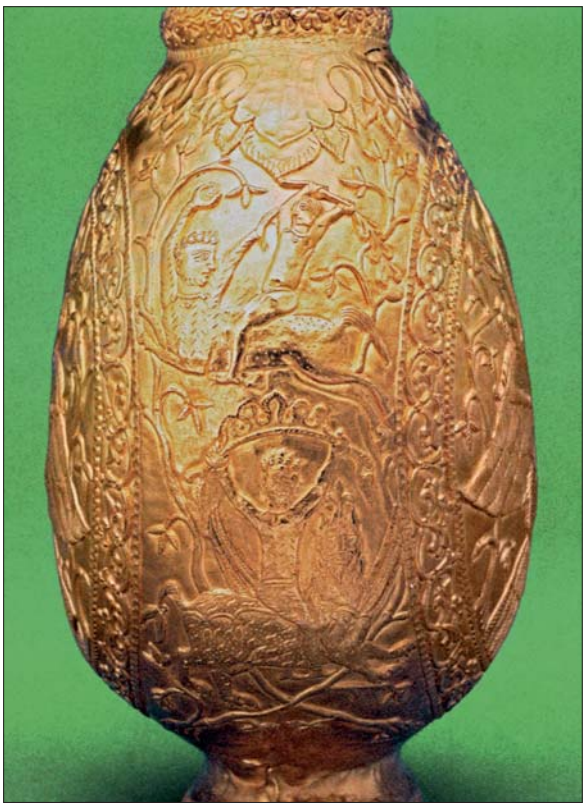

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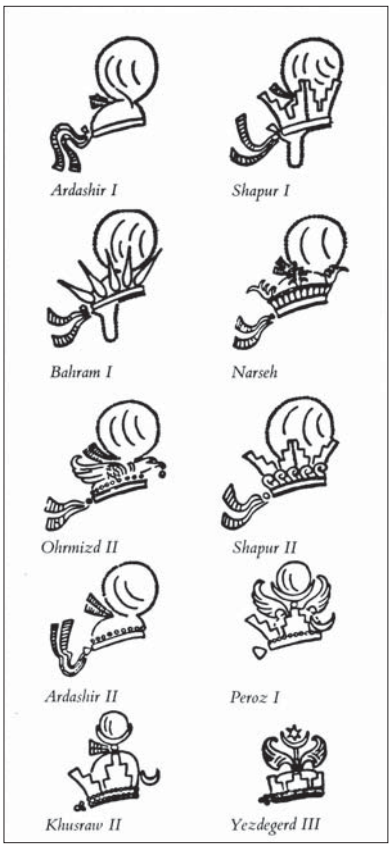
Fig. 3: 1: "Abduction" scene from jug № 7; 2: "Battle of Centaurs and Lapiths" from jug № 7; 3: "A woman, raised up by an eagle" from jug № 2; 4: Partially gilt silver vessel from the Hermitage collections; 5: A Sasanian glass medallion that was sold by auction in Munich in 2005; 6: 8th century silver dish with gilt from the Hermitage collections



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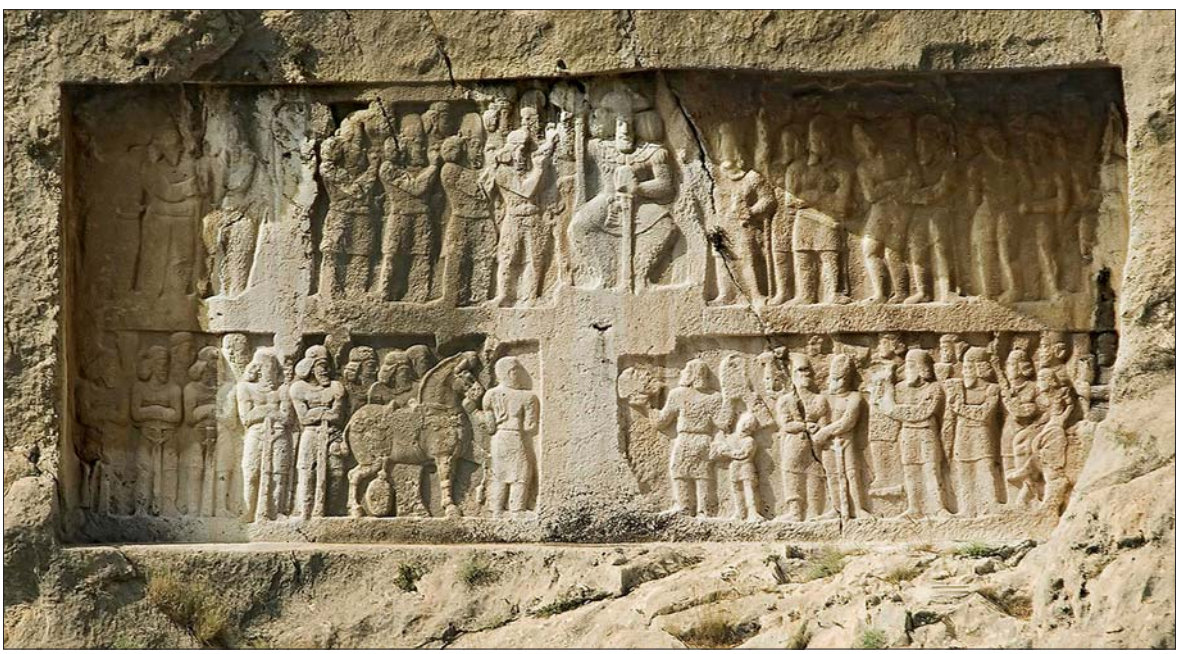

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Fig. 4: 1: Every Sasanian King of Kings had his individual ruler's crown. The ten crowns represented here reproduce the respective rulers' images on their coins; 2: The scene on the neck of jug № 7 represents the sacred tree Gaokerena and a heron, defending it from the evil demonic frog; 3: Rock-sculptures from Tag-e Chowgan valley near the town of Bishapur

THE ABODRITI-PRAEDENECENTI BETWEEN THE TISZA AND THE DANUBE IN THE 9TH CENTURY

Pavel Georgiev

The situation on the northwestern edge of the Bulgar khanate in the Early Middle Ages is not very well studied due to the dynamics of the political events and the multidirectional ethno-cultural processes there (Bálint 1991, passim; Дмитриевић 1991, 208–212). This often results in some discrepancies in the interpretation of the constantly accumulating archaeological information. In this respect the study of the written sources has kept its leading role in the researches.

One of the important questions in need of a new interpretation is the one about the Abodriti-Praedenecenti mentioned in the 820s (territory, origin and nature). The analysis of the information derived from the written sources, and its comparison with the results of archaeological excavations, provide a historically reliable picture of the population inhabiting the territories between the Tisza and the Danube Rivers in the 8th–9th centuries.

Historical data

Information about the Abodriti-Praedenecenti is provided by Einhard's Annals. Einhard reports that in 824 there was an unexpected visit of delegates sent by the Bulgar khan Omurtag (814–831) to the Frankish Emperor Louis the Pious (814–840) (Либи 1960, 36–37). The Bulgar khan proposed signing a "*peace treaty*" which surprised the Emperor. In order to understand the motives of the Bulgars, he sent the delegates back, accompanied by one of his trusted men. A second Bulgar delegation came to Bavaria before the end of the same year but Louis ordered that the delegates should wait. At the same time he received in Aachen *"delegates of the Abodriti, usually called Praedenecenti, who were neighbours of the Bulgars and inhabited Dacia at the Danube"*. The latter complained about the *"the unfair and hostile acts of the Bulgars and asked for help against them"*. The Emperor ordered them to *"go back"* and return again at the time when the Bulgar delegates were to be received. The hearing of the two delegations took place in Aachen in May 825. The Bulgars announced that their khan insists on defining *"the borders and the boundaries between the Franks and the Bulgars"* but they were sent back with a letter in which the Emperor answered *"according to his wish"*. The answer did not satisfy khan Omurtag, of course, and the following year (826) he sent his first delegate with a letter, in which he *"asked" "for an immediate defining of the borders or if this does/did not suit the Emperor, each of them should protect the borders of their country without a signed peace treaty"*. The Emperor postponed his answer again because he had received news that the khan of the Bulgars was killed.

Einhard's information is repeated by the Annals of Fulda but without mentioning the Abodriti-Praedenecenti (Либи 1960, 42). In the compiled part of Vita Hludovici Imperatoris, the Bulgar delegations are dated to 825 and 826 (Либи 1960, 51–52). Abodriti are mentioned there as early as 818 in relation with events for which Einhard, being a contemporary, writes about a population bearing the same name, and living at the eastern border of the Empire. The Bulgar delegations are also mentioned by a 9th-century written source using information from the Annals of Fulda (Либи 1960, 364). So the data concerning the Abodriti alias Praedenecenti, living at the Danube, refer mostly to the period between 824 and 825. Einhard writes about delegates of the Praedenecenti in the court of Louis the Pious in 822 as well but does not provide further details.

The information presented above has attracted the attentions of historians but has not been a subject of a special study. It is not my aim to make a review of the opinions expressed on various occasions. I will focus only on studies contributing to the interpretation of the above-mentioned information. One of them is the study of V. Gyuzelev on the so-called *Bavarian Geographer* (Гюзелев 1981, 68–81). The author agreed with the arguments that the Nortabtrezi inhabiting territories near the "Danish borders" mentioned in this source were different from the Ostabtrezi who lived on the Middle Danube and were identical to the Abodriti-Praedenecenti mentioned by Einhard (Bulin 1960, 9–12). Based on this, V. Gyuzelev denies the statement of the Praedenecenti being identical with the so-called Branichevtsi (Златарски 1970, 382, 400–401). Discussing their

dual name, he points out that the name Praedenecenti is the leading one, while Abodriti, which in the written sources and the academic publications on the matter is connected to the Northern Slavs (the Slavs living along the Elbe (Labe) River), he believes, was used by Einhard to designate the population inhabiting the territories along the Danube (Гюзелев 1981, 76). J. Hermann expresses a different opinion. After pointing out reasonably that the "*regions and fortresses*" mentioned by the *Bavarian Geographer* were situated next to the eastern border of the Frankish Kingdom, he locates the Eastern Abodriti next to the Northern ones, notwithstanding Einhard's information (HERMANN 1995, 41–42, Anm. 21; *Fig. 1*). W. Pohl believes that the Abodriti were Slavs inhabiting the territories from Mecklenburg to Belgrade on the Danube, however, he is not certain about the location of the Praedenecenti who were, according to him, "*neighbours of the Bulgar Khanate*" (POHL 2002, 118, 327).

TERRITORY AND STATUS OF THE ABODRITI-PRAEDENECENTI

The majority of researchers accept that the territory of the Abodriti-Praedenecenti were situated on the left bank of the Danube, southeast of the Tisza estuary, in the region of present-day Banat (Коледаров 1979, 33, Map 4; BREZEANU 1984, 123).

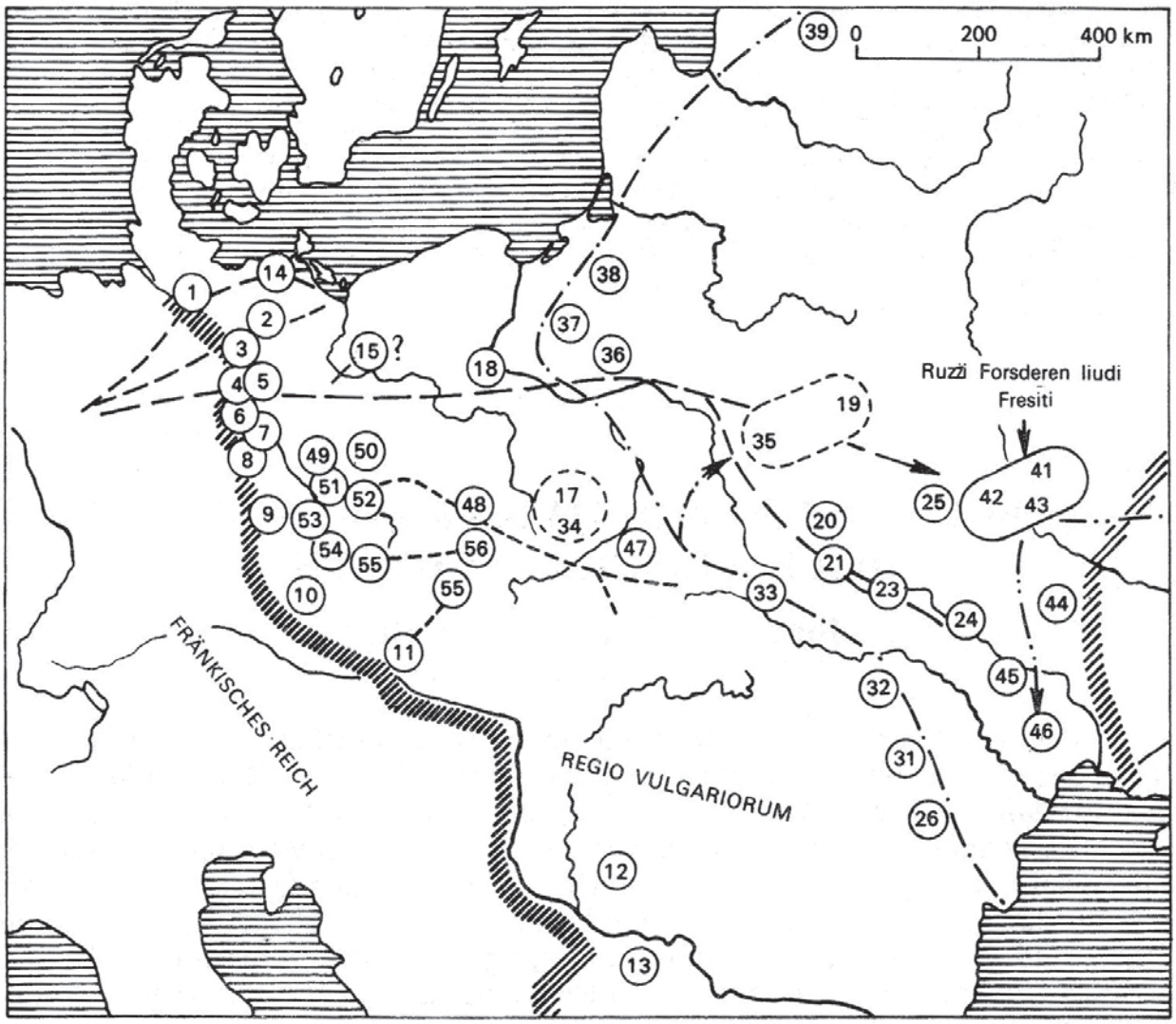

Fig. 1: The locations of the tribes mentioned by the Bavarian Geographer (after HERMANN 1995): 1. Nortabtrezi, 2. Vuilci, ... 11. Marharii, 12. Vulgarii, 13. Merehanos, 14. Ostabtrezi, etc.

Einhard locates the territory of the Abodriti-Praedenecenti within "*Dacia at the Danube*" *(Daciam Danubio adiacentem incolunt*) or at least in that part of Dacia, which was *"contermini Bulgaris"* (sic!). V. Gyuzelev believes that it is Trajan's Dacia, situated to the north of the Danube. However, the events commented by Einhard refer to a territory which is situated west of this area. In accordance with the ancient tradition, the term "*Dacia*", used by Einhard, also includes the territory between the Danube and the Tisza (Wolfram 1986, 41–42). In Vita Karoli Magni, 15, for example, he speaks of *utramque Pannoniam, et adpositam in altera Danubii ripa Daciam, i. e. "both Panoniae and Dacia lying on the other side of the Danube"* (Либи 1960, 31). As early as the Roman period, the Lower Tisza was considered a "*Dacian western border*" of various neighbours of the Empire (Szádecky-Kardoss 1953, 78, 80–81, 86).

Therefore, it can be accepted that the Abodriti-Praedenecenti also inhabited territories between the Tisza and the Danube. The region between the two rivers remained *ad septentrionalem plagam Danubi* as stated by *The Bavarian Geographer* for the Eastern Abodriti and together with it pertained to "*the part of Dacia situated near the Danube*", as pointed out by Einhard about the Abodriti-Praedenecenti (*Fig. 2*).

Mentioning the Osterabtrezi (=the Abodriti-Praedenecenti) among "*the areas*" and "*the people*" who *"inhabit near their* [i.e. the ones of the East Frankish Kingdom – P. Georgiev] *borders"* shows that they have lived in border regions on the Bulgar side as well. It should not be forgotten

Fig. 2: Map of the Bulgar khanate and its neighbours in the first decades of the 9th century (after Коледаров 1979)

that this information provided by *The Bavarian Geographer* refers to the period when the population under discussion was within the borders or at least under the custody of the Bulgar Khanate (Гюзелев 1981, 69, 80).

Einhard's description of the conflict between the Bulgars and the Abodriti-Praedenecenti leaves the impression that their territory covered a wide band between the Bulgar Khanate and the Frankish Kingdom. After the destruction of the entire Avar Khaganate at the very beginning of the 9th century, the Bulgarian western border reached the Tisza River (Коледаров 1979, 20–21, Map 4; Pohl 2002, 327). In this case, the Abodriti-Praedenecenti living beyond, remained not only north of the Danube but also west of the Lower and the Middle Tisza. The Frankish domain was situated beyond the Danube, leaving the Pannonian mark far from the great river, and on the territory between them Einhard puts "*a Pannonian*" as well as "*an Avar*" border.[1]

The Abodriti-Praedenecenti occupied a borderline zone of uncertain status proved by the delegations they sent to the Franks in 822 and 824–825. Had they lived within the Frankish Kingdom, the Bulgars would have never dared to start "*hostile*" actions against them before settling their relations with it/the Frankish kingdom. On the contrary, Einhard presents Bulgars and Abodriti-Praedenecenti as parties involved in a conflict taking place at the Frankish border. Louis the Pious became an arbiter in this conflict but behind the scene he was on the side of his eastern neighbours. For that reason he protracted the audiences of the Bulgars, inquired about the exact nature of their demands or gave formal answers. The Abodriti's delegates were *"given an order"* to return back (*domum ire*). The grammatical form used is the infinitive of *eo,* "*go*" but it expresses benevolence as well. The Bulgars insisted on *pacis*, i. e. a peace treaty but the Frankish side diligently avoided such an obligation.

With view to the situation, khan Omurtag asked for *"establishing the borders and the limits between the Franks and the Bulgars" (de terminis ac finibus inter Bulgaros ac Francos constituendis).* The term *terminaes* designates a line marked with signs while *finaes* concerns a border territory (Trousset 1993, 25; Casevitz 1993, 17; Ginouvès 1998, 198, Note 95). Therefore, the demand of the Bulgars envisaged establishing a border line and border regions constituting a buffer zone (see Коледаров 1979, Map 2; *Fig. 4. 2*).

In 826 khan Omurtag set the question in a different way. He accepted that if *interpositione terminorum* "*did not suit*" Louis I, *"each party should guard its borders* [plural!] *even without a signed peace treaty" (suos quisque terminos sine pacis foedere tueretur).*

The formula *pacis foedere* does not necessarily mean a "*peace treaty*" since the *foedus* is often a treaty between nonequivalent/unequal partners. It is hard to believe that the Bulgar khan was not informed about it. In fact, Einhard defines the first demand of the Bulgars as *pacis.* He describes with the same term the treaty between Charlemagne (768–814) and Michael I Rangabe (811–813) (Либи 1960, 34). The treaty with Nicephorus I (802–811), on the other hand, he calls *pacta.* However, Einhard calls *foedus* the treaty between Charlemagne and the *"Emperors of Constantinople"* as well (Либи 1960, 32). Thus the question about the actual meaning of *pacis foedere* in the Bulgar draft for a treaty in 826 can be defined only within the context of the events. Since the establishment of a border between the Bulgar khanate and the Frankish kingdom meant liquidation of the existing status of the Abodriti-Praedenecenti, it can be accepted that the Bulgar demand for a guard on both sides of the border did not include a *"federate treaty"* with the Abodriti-Praedenecenti. Therefore we can assume that during their visit in 822, and especially by asking for "*help*" against the Bulgars in 824, the Abodriti accepted those obligations with regard to the Franks. It seems that this was the immediate reason for the Bulgar pressure on them and the related diplomatic persistence expressed in front of the Frankish Emperor.

After his diplomatic failure, khan Omurtag started military campaigns against the Timochani and probably against another population gravitating to the Franks, similar to the Abodriti-Praedenecenti,

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[1] Balderic, the Duke of Friuli, who undertook military operations against Ljudevit Posavski, the Slavic Duke of Lower Pannonia, entered Carinthia in 819, "*a territory under Ljudevit's custody*" (Либи 1960, 35). In 826 he and Count Gerold were appointed "*governors of the Pannonian border*" (*comites ac Pannonici limitis*) and reported at the Council of Ingelheim that after the Emperor's third refusal of satisfying their demands, the Bulgars still had not undertaken any actions in response – compare with Либи 1960, 38. In the same article, a little earlier, Einhard calls the above mentioned individuals "*custodians of the Avar border*" (*Avarici limitis custodes*), who were given an order by a special messenger sent by the Emperor to find out whether the report on the death of the Bulgar khan was true (see Либи 1960, 37). Such intelligence could be received from a Bulgar territory situated nearby and therefore it can be accepted as an indication that "*the Pannonian*" and "*the Avar border*" remained between the Pannonian mark and the Bulgar territories situated to the East and the South.

as well. Frankish written sources report Bulgar actions "*on boats*" along the Danube and Drava Rivers to Lower Pannonia, but do not mention actions directed to the Tisza River. The anxious expectation of the Franks in the eastern parts of the Empire for a Bulgar attack in 826–827 (see Note 1 here) can hardly be restricted only to the Drava valley and Lower Pannonia. Count Gerold was probably active on the territory of the former Roman province of Valeria. Einhard writes that in 828 *"the Bulgar army was devastating terminos (fines) Pannoniae superioris"* (Либи 1960, 38–39). Military actions between Franks and Bulgars in this period are proved by a piece of information revealing that Ludwig the German, the Emperor's son and King of Bavaria, was sent at the head of a big army against the Bulgars (Божилов–Гюзелев 1999, 152). His domain was at the Upper Danube and it seems reasonable that his actions were directed from the Eastern and the Pannonian marks to the Middle Danube (*Fig. 2*). An indication of the military actions of the Bulgars along the Tisza River, probably in response to the German offensive from Bavaria, is provided by the inscription of the zera-tarkan Onegavon, Omurtag's "*trusted men*", who drowned there while serving "*in the army*" (Бешевлиев 1979, 215, № 60). In 830 the Emperor's son, Lothar, was also involved in the military campaign against the Bulgars. He ruled in Northern Italy and it seems that he was involved in the military actions along the Drava valley.

The Bulgar-Frankish war must have ended in 831 since a peace treaty recognizing the Bulgar outlet on the Middle Danube was signed the following year.

The first part of the text of *The Bavarian Geographer*, written after 830 but prior to 843 (Гюзелев 1981, 72), is the main source providing information about the relations between the two neighbouring countries. The Bulgars were listed among the people, which "*live next to our* [i.e. the Frankish – P. Georgiev] *borders"* and the Bulgar khanate was described as *"enormous territory and numerous people"* but having only five fortresses (*Fig. 1*). The Abodriti-Praedenecenti, called there Osterabtrezi, occupied a leading position among the "people", *"who live near their borders"*. V. Gyuzelev believes that by that time they already lived within the boundaries of the Bulghar khanate and thinks that the title expression in front of them means *"There are, who outside the borders of those* (of the Franks – P. Georgiev] *inhabit"* (Гюзелев 1981, 69, compare with p. 80). The Osterabtrezi, as well as the Nortabtrezi, remained outside the Frankish Kingdom and lived *"closest to the borders"* with its neighbours. The Danes were neighbours of the Northern Abodriti, while the Eastern ones, as stated by Einhard, inhabited "*the outlying parts*" (see the substantive form of *ad-iaceo – adiacentia, ium*) of Danubian Dacia, dominated by that time by the Bulgars (Фехер 1955, 56–57; Bálint 1991, 98; Vékony 1996, 328; Божилов–Гюзелев 1999, 153). A memory of the Bulgar domination over the Hungarian puszta can be found in the so-called Gesta Hungarorum providing information from the 9th century (Györffy 1965, 42–43; Moravcsik 1969, 167; Györffy 1972, 205). When it was conquered by the Magyars in the late 9th century, this region was governed by Salanus dux who was a descendant of Keanus magnus, dux Bulgariae. It is believed that "*the name*" of the latter comes from the khan title of 9th century Bulgar rulers or is directly connected to the khans Krum (after 796–814), Omurtag and even to King Simeon (893–927) (Коледаров 1979, 18). It is explicitly stated in Gesta Hungarorum that: *Terram vero, qui iacet inter Thisciam et Danubiam, preoccupavit sibi Keanus magnus, dux Bulgarie, avus Salani ducis, usque ad confinium Ruthenorum et Polonorum et fecisset ibi habitáre Sclauos et Bulgaros.* Therefore a conclusion can be made that the territory between the Danube and the entire course of the Tisza River was "*conquered at the beginning*" for the Bulgars by one of their "*great khans*" whose name remains unknown. It is beyond any doubt that this information reflects a historical event dated to the first half of the 9th century, regardless of the possible confusion with later events by the Anonymous author. If judging by the facts presented above, the most probable identification of Keanus magnus is that with khan Omurtag, whose diplomatic and military pressure aimed at gaining control over the Abodriti-Praedenecenti and establishing a common border with the East Frankish Kingdom were recorded by Einhard. What is more, Gesta Hungarorum pointed out that the occupation of the territory between the Danube and the Tisza Rivers was made "*with the help and the advice of the Greek emperor*", and the Bulgar army used *portus Graecorum*, which is supposed to be the city of Alba Bulgariae (present-day Belgrade on the Danube) dominated by that time by the Bulgars (Moravcsik 1969, 168–169). This information is usually neglected due to the fact that it is not confirmed by other sources. However, the word *egressus* is used in it, meaning not only "*going out*" but "*disembarkation*" as well. In this case the expression *egressus auxilio* suggests that the "*Greek*" help was in the form of ships for transporting the Bulgar army. And since the Frankish annals provide information that the Bulgar expeditions along the Danube and the Drava Rivers were made *per navali (navibus)*, it can be accepted that the ships were most probably provided by the

Byzantines. It seems hard to believe that it was the river fleet of the Byzantine Empire which had officially signed treaties with the western Empire and wanted to maintain good relations. Therefore an official interference of "*the Greek Emperor*" seems really questionable. However, the alliance between Omurtag's Khanate and the Byzantine Empire in that period is a fact and it is not improbable that the latter had found an indirect way to help its neighbour.[2] The information provided by Gesta Hungarorum that Bulgars and Greeks had found their death in the Tisza at that time (probably people from the crews) is supported by the information about the death of Omurtag's "*trusted man*" Onegavon.

The Annals of Fulda also provide information about the Bulgar control on the Tisza. In 863 Carloman of Bavaria signed an agreement with knyaz Boris (852–889) for a joint campaign against Rostislav of Great Moravia (846–870). The Bulgar troops advanced to the centers of Rostislav's state "*from east*", probably from the Bulgar territories along the Upper Tisza (Либи 1960, 44).

The information provided by Regino of Prüm's Chronicon about the territories between the Danube and the Tisza reveals that in 889, during their conquest of the land along the Danube, the Magyars "*wandered in the steppes of Pannonia and Avaria" (Pannoniarum et Avarum solitudines)* (Либи 1960, 308). For this reason probably, king Arnulf's delegation to the Bugarian knyaz Vladimir (889–893), sent in September 892, travelled by ship along the Sava River and its tributaries to the Lower Danube (Либи 1960, 47; Георгиев 2005, 265).

In the Arabic geography compiled ca. 870 (surviving in a work of al-Gardizi dated to the 10th century), the distance between the Nándors, i. e. the Unogunduro-Bulgars living in the Carpathian Basin, and the land of the Moravians was described as a 10 day walking distance, estimated to be 250–300 km walk via the present-day Great Hungarian Plain (Györffy 1965, 28). Defining this territory as "*deserted*" did not simply mean that it was a deserted and uninhabited land. Romanian researchers have pointed out recently that *solitudines Ava(ro)rum* was used to designate a buffer zone (Pétrin 2000, 37–38; Madgearu 2003, 45). A. Madgearu believes that the definition "*Avar*" was just reminiscence and not a proof of reviving a local Avar domination in the region.[3] It concerns the present-day Alföld area, situated between the Tisza and the Danube Rivers, which served as a buffer zone between the Bulgar and the Frankish domain until the late 9th century (*Fig. 4. 2*). It had served as such between the domains of Gepides and Langobardes and even earlier, in the Late Roman period. "*Deserted*" and "*uninhabited*" lands were often defined as border areas, namely the so-called *terra nullius* (Casevitz 1993, 17) and numerous examples can be listed. Theophanes the Confessor defines as *ἐρήμην* (i. e. "*deserted"*) the territory from Sidera to Deultum (IV, 15), *"which was a border between Byzantines and Bulgars"* ca. mid-9th century (Гиби 1964, 117–118; Георгиев 2007, 200). The border area between Bavaria and Great Moravia was mentioned as *deserta Boiorum (=Bavarian deserted land)* by the Frankish annals related to the year 858 (Gûzelev 1973, 97, Note 30). V. Gyuzelev reasonably pays attention to the information provided by Einhard (Vita Kar., 13) that during the conquest of Pannonia in 802, the Franks found out that the area where the residence of the Avar khagan had been situated, was *"deserted*" and *"deprived of all its population"* due to the long period of war (Либи 1960, 30). In the so-called Geography of King Alfred the Great, the territories *"east of the land of the Carinthians"* are called "*desert lands"*, and beyond them was "*the country of the Bulgars" (Pulgara land)* (Gûzelev 1973, 95; Коледаров 1979, 21). And since Carinthia was situated to the Pannonian mark, it becomes clear that "*the desert lands*" reached the Middle Danube and perhaps even the Tisza River (*Figs. 2, 4. 2*).[4] The first story about the life of St. Naum provided information about the territory of the Middle Danube, which were "*deserted*" and after the withdrawal of the Bulgars remained *"deserted under the power of the Ugrians*" (Иванов 1970, 307). With view to the information provided by Regino of Prüm, these territories can be located between the Danube and the Tisza, since in the beginning they were populated by the Magyars, called "*Paeonian* [meaning Pannonian – P. Georgiev] *people*" in the story. Therefore the life story of St. Naum shows directly that the territory between the Danube and Tisza Rivers was

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2 It is not improbable that the Bulgars used for their expeditions along the Tisza River, and the earlier one along the Drava River, ships similar to those about which Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus wrote that they were available to the Croatians in the 9th–10th centuries (compare Константин Багрянородный 1989, 136–139, com. note 9 and 10). It is worth recalling that according to Einhard, Charlemagne had left "the sea towns" in Dalmatia under the control of the "Emperor of Constantinople" (Либи 1960, 31–32).

3 W. Pohl expresses a different opinion: Pohl 2002, 322.

4 It seems that the existence of a buffer zone situated between the part of Pannonia inhabited by Magyars and the Frankish Kingdom gave reason to Constantine VII. Porphyrogenitus to use the comparative degree for the geographic definition "further west" – compare Константин Багрянородный 1989, 52/53, 337.

conquered after "*the Bulgar rout*" and supports the information of Gesta Hungarorum that it was dominated by the Bulgars prior to this event.

In the time of the Avar Khaganate, the territories between the Tisza and the Danube Rivers formed its central part. The khan's residence was situated there, at least in the middle and the late period of the Khaganate's existence. The location of the residence is still not certain. Some scholars think that it has to be sought in the region of the present-day city of Kecskemét, near Tételhegy (Titel) in Bács-Kiskun county (Сентпетери 1989, 120–121, Map 1; Сентпетери 2014, in print). Others believe that the Late Avar Hring was situated in the southern part of the territory, between the two rivers (Szőke 2009, 395, Fig. 1). The unpopulated part of the Khaganate's territory was typical for border areas (Vékony 1979, 305–306). As early as the Early Avar Period, the present-day Great Hungarian Plain became an inner area of the Khaganate (Pohl 2002, 89, Anm. 20, Karte 4). The earliest traces of Avar sites have been found there, the settlements being concentrated on the left bank of the Tisza River.

The number of the population decreased after the destruction of the Khaganate but it is difficult to believe that it was completely annihilated. The archaeological data dated to the 9th–10th centuries prove this suggestion (Съоке 1989, 113–114). The above-quoted author believes that the archaeological materials are typical for the Late Avar culture with some influence of the Saltovo-Mayacki cultural milieu. This provides grounds to suggest that the relations with the steppe Khazaria had a political character as well and to deny the possibility that the territory between the Tisza and the Danube was dominated by the Bulgars in the 9th century (Съоке 1989, 110–111).

The data on Bulgar political control over this region from the 820s onwards was presented above (on the matter see Крищто 1987, 265, with ref.). It was a priority for khan Omurtag and his successors with view to the relations between the Bulgar Khanate, the East Frankish (German) Kingdom and Great Moravia. However, the political control over the region did not mean that it was part of the territory of the Bulgar state. It seems more probable that it kept its importance as a buffer zone being under the custody of the Bulgar Khanate from 832 until the Magyars settled down in the Carpathian Basin.

Ethnic composition

The question about the population of the buffer zone situated between the Bulgar Khanate and the Frankish kingdom in the 9th century is a complex one and can hardly be solved without a detailed analysis and synthesis of the information derived from various sources. It will be discussed here from a general point of view.

Prior to the war in 795–803, the territory was populated mainly by Avars and people from the steppes related to them. This was normal since the territory between the two rivers was the central area of the Khaganate as early as the second half of the 6th century. An important proof for this is the map of the burials yielding skeletons with Mongoloid physical anthropological features (*Fig. 3. 1*). During all three periods of the development of the Khaganate (6th–9th centuries) the burials were concentrated in the area between the Tisza and the Danube (Kiss 1995, 131, Abb. 1. 1). The review on the regions where burials yielding parts of a horse skeleton dating to 6th–7th centuries were found produces a certain picture (Рашев 2007, 159–162, Tab. 98. 1, with ref.). They are concentrated on the left bank of the Tisza River and along the lower valleys of its tributaries, the Maros and the Körös. According to D. Csallány and I. Kovrig, these burials were left by the Bulgar-Kutrigurs who settled down there together with the Avars as early as 568. Others, such as P. Somogyi, talk about an "*East European nomadic component in the Avar Khaganate*". The existence of a community comprising Middle Asian Avars and a population form the East European steppes has been recently suggested (Lőrinczy 1995, 399). The concentration of pit graves dated to the Middle Avar period is found on a larger area – the Middle Danube, the Middle and Upper Tisza as well as the central part of the territory between the areas listed above (*Fig. 3. 2*). It supports an earlier hypothesis that in the late 7th century Kuber's Bulgars were living along the Middle and Lower Tisza, to the north of the so-called *Sermesianoi* (Поповиħ 1986, 114, Note 101).

In general, the data on the Middle Tisza basin prove a long preservation of a population of East European steppe origin, organized in tribes (Рашев 2007, 162). Regardless of the fact whether it was Bulgar-Kutrigurs or some other people from the steppes, this population bore a culture similar to that of the Bulgar population living along the Lower Danube. The Bulgar official in the 9th century must have relied on remnants of this population as well as on newly-arrived Avars and Slavs. In my opinion,

the information provided by Gesta Hungarorum about the "*Bulgars and Slavs*" under the custody of Salanus dux should be interpreted in this context. It is hard to believe that the Bulgars had to colonize this area, a hypothesis which met reasonable objections (Bálint 1991, 98–100; Дмитриевић 1991, 209). In this context, the often contested information provided by Gesta Hungarorum and the other sources cited above gain additional support. In general, terms such as "*Avars*" and "*Avar culture*", especially in the Late Avar and the post-Avar periods, should not be overestimated. They are polytonyms behind which various ethno-cultural traditions transpire (Horedt 1987, 20–21; Pohl 2002, 323–324).

According to Einhard (Vita Kar. 13), Pannonia is *"an area inhabited by this tribe"* – that is, the Avars, called Huns by the author. At the end of the war, the area was "*deprived of all its population"* (Либи 1960, 30). It seems that this description is not too exaggerated since the Pannonian mark established by Charlemagne remained at a considerable distance from the Danube (Коледаров 1979, 37, Note 83, Map 4). This does not mean, of course, that the eastern part of Pannonia was not controlled by the Frankish administration. Einhard's description of the borders of Charlemagne's conquests includes "*the two Pannoniae and Dacia lying on the other bank of the Danube"*, most probably as far as the Tisza. However, these territories were used by the Franks as a buffer on the side of the Bulgar domain in the Carpathians and Oltenia. The "*Monk of St. Gall*" points out that Charlemagne refused to go to war with the Bulgars because "*after the destruction of the Huns* [= the Avars]*, they did not seem dangerous to him for the Frankish kingdom"* (Либи 1960, 285). This statement is approached with caution. However, it is highly probable that after the defeat in 796 of the Avar Hring situated in the area between the Danube and the Tisza, there was a decrease of Frankish activity in the eastern parts of the Khaganate, a circumstance used by the Bulgars who occupied these territories or, what seems more probable, to patronize the local Avar aristocracy (Коледаров 1979, 32; Павлов 1997, 59).

About the territory *"between the Rhine, the Vistula, the Ocean and the Danube"* Einhard writes that the people living there *"are very similar in language but differ very much in customs and nature"* and defines some of the big Slavic tribes (Либи 1960, 32). When he mentions the Danube he means the Upper Danube. The territory enclosed within these boundaries was inhabited mainly by Slavs. The same information is provided by the Bavarian Geographer as well. However, the situation to the south of the Danube was quite different. Einhard writes that in 811 Charlemagne sent a big army in Pannonia, which had "*to put an end to the quarrels with the Huns (=Avars) and Slavs"* (Либи 1960, 33). It means that the ethnic composition of the population remained the same since the time of the Khaganate (Pohl 2002, Karte 2).

The population living on the territory between the Danube and the Tisza in the 9th century must have consisted of Avars, Bulgars and Slavs. Accordind to the other contested information, provided by the "*Monk of St. Gall*" (I, 27), as early as his anti-Avar wars Charlemagne was at war with the Huns (=Avars), Slavs and Bulgars. The fact that the latter were mentioned as inhabiting the eastern parts of the Khanate might be explained by the presence of Carpathian and Pannonian Bulgars in the Avar army.

Together with the ethnic groups defined by names, the "*Monk of St. Gall*" also writes about "*many other very cruel tribes"*, who did not allow anyone to travel by land to Greece (Либи 1960, 283). A document certifying the success of the mission started by the Franks during their military campaign against the Hring in 796 also provides information about "*gens bruta et irrationabilis vel certe idiotae et sine litteris*", which after being baptized turned into "*laboriosa ad cognoscenda sacra mysteria invenitur*" (Pohl 2002, 319; Szőke 2009, 396). It seems that the Council of the Bishops was held at that time *in Castra … super flumen albidum Danubium*, not far away from Pepin's camp in the Sirmium region. The Abodriti-Praedenecenti were probably among the unnamed *"cruel tribes"*, baptized after 796, living in the southern parts of the territories between the Danube and the Tisza or the Drava and the Sava, through which the main roads from Central Europe to the Bulgar Khanate and the Byzantine Empire passed. An indication for this can be found in a sentence from Alkuin's letter (№ 111) concerning the baptizing of Avars by Saxon missionaries. It recommended that they should work among *praedicatores non praedatores* (Szőke 2009, 396, Anm. 15). By using this expression Alkuin defines "*the post-Avar population*" in Pannonia as being composed from "*praisers (of God)*" as well as "*robbers*".

The often contested Suda Lexicon also provides information about the events in the eastern parts of the Avar Khanate before and after 803. As it is well known, the 10th century anonymous author states three times that the Bulgars completely destroyed the Avars (Гиби 1964, 309–310). The author stresses this fact in entries related to both ethnic groups. In the entry related to the Bulgars, he makes several associations and parallels with the Avars. All this makes the information seem authentic and reliable notwithstanding some mythological

or anecdotal passages. The statement of the author about the complete defeat of the Avar by the Bulgars is accompanied by information about Avar prisoners of war interrogated by the Bulgar khan. As a result of this data, even scholars skeptical to Suda accept that from 803 until 805 khan Krum succeeded in including the eastern parts of the Khaganate within the boundaries of his Khanate, leaving "*a buffer zone, partly inhabited by Slavs and partly – by Avars*" to the west of them (Божилов–Гюзелев 1999, 126–127). It has been proved recently that the information provided by Suda about *"a complete defeat of the Avars"* by the Bulgars is exaggerated (Olajos 2002, 230–235). According to the author the text speaks only about *"inflicting an easy defeat (capture)"*. The defeat of the Avar Khaganate was conditioned by an internal crisis and partition into separate parts (Кланица 1987, 74–81). Local political formations were established within the Khaganate as a result of the processes of internal disintegration and external blows, and they gradually fell a prey to their neighbours (Pohl 2002, 320–322).

Information on the territory situated at the northwestern limits of the Bulgar Khanate and inhabited by Avars is provided by the Anonymous Vatican Narration – during the campaign of Nicephorus I Genik, khan Krum managed *"to hire against payment Avars and the neighbouring Slavic tribes"* (Гиби 1961, 13). Apparently it does not concern prisoners of war taken between 803 and 805. The fact that the Avars as well as the Slavs were recruited with the promise of payment reveals that they must have come from independent or semi-dependent territories. With view to the historical and archaeological data on the Avar-Slavic and steppe/East European origin of the population in the Danube and the Tisza basins mentioned above, it seems realistic that the Bulgars recruited people from these territories. Furthermore, in the same year, as attested by Einhard, Avars and Slavs from Pannonia rose against the Franks and they were driven from the northwest.

On the basis of this data, it can be accepted that the "*easy*" victory (capture) of the Bulgars over the Avars ca. 803–805 was in fact taking possession over the territories between the Western Carpathians and the Tisza. The area between the Tisza and the Danube was put under the Bulgars' control permanently as a result of a military campaign from 827 until 831. A local political government dominated by the Avar aristocracy and headed by the Kavhan must have been established there in the years following 796 (Pohl 2002, 320–322) and the Abodriti-Praedenecenti must have been its subjects. Until 811 this "*Avar principality*" was dominated by the Frankish Kingdom. Scriptor incertus provides information that the rebellion in Pannonia broke *the status quo* and the Bulgars recruited considerable Avar-Slavic forces to use them in the military campaign against the Byzantine Empire (Гиби 1961, 23; Szádecky-Kardoss 1986, 11; Hermann 1995, 43). The eastern part of the Khaganate was the most probable territory from where khan Krum and his brother recruited "*a great army consisting of Avars and all Slaviniae*". However, it does not seem probable that the Bulgars were able to put under permanent control the territory between the Danube and the Tisza in this period. Apparently after 814 the Frankish Kingdom succeeded to restore its influence over the "*Avar*" communities in Pannonia and the territory between the Danube and the Tisza, and used them a protective zone on the side of the Bulgar Khanate.

Abodriti-Praedenecenti denominations

The question about the real nature of these denominations interested the scholars as early as the 19th century. It is of great importance for this exposé/presentation. At the beginning, the academic community believed that these were the names of one or two separate Slavic tribes. V. Gyuzelev succeeded in eliminating most of the delusions related to the matter but not the one concerning the Slavic origin of this population (Гюзелев 1981, 76–77). In his opinion "*the true name of the Slavs living at the Danube*" was Praedenecenti and the name Abodriti was correctly interpreted by all researchers to designate "*the ones inhabiting the territories at the Oder (River)*", "*to define that they were also Slavs*" and was "*transferred on the Praedenecenti*".

L. Niederle believes that from an etymological point of view the name Praedenecenti is similar to Branichevtsi, a statement which leads to an ungrounded identification of one tribe with the other (Златарски 1970, 400–401). The Czech historian H. Bulin accepts that it is an irregular form of the Slavic designation *Придунавяне* (Bulin 1960, 19–25). V. Gyuzelev disagrees and bases his arguments on the conclusions of the linguist V. Georgiev, who states that Praedenecenti originates from an Old Bulgarian combination of the words *прэдьн` чди* (plural) meaning "*leading (=the*

noble) people (=children, family)" (ГЕОРГИЕВ 1964, 91). This way Einhard accepted the Slavic name for the Eastern Abodriti meaning: "*The Abodriti who are usually called leading (=noble) family, children*". The Hungarian archaeologist G. Vékony also proposes a Slavic etymology. He thinks that praedenecenti originates from **predъ-ae/anec-enьci* and means "*Volk von diesseits des Donez (Flusses)*" (people on this bank of the river Donets) (VÉKONY 1981, 225, Anm. 101).[5]

The role of the Abodriti-Praedenecenti in the political relations between the Bulgar Khanate and the Frankish Kingdom questions their affiliation to the Slavic ethnos. Therefore the concept about the Praedenecenti being Slavs in origin and language has to be rejected.

In its structure and composition the name *Praedenecenti* is a Latin composite. It consists of a base and a suffix (?), which is easy to discern in the word *adiacentem* used by Einhard in the same passage in which he explains that *Praedenecenti* is a *vulgo* form of the "*ethnonym*" *Abodriti* (ЛИБИ 1960, 36). In the context of his story, *adiacentem* is derivative from the verb ad-iaceo "*lie next to*", "*border*", ad- being a preposition beyond any doubt meaning "*at, by, next to*". It is used in a substantive form in Einhard's text and means *"surroundings*". The Praedenecenti had indeed lived there. Therefore, the peripheral position of the Abodriti in relation to the Empire seems embedded in their "*byname*".

In its base the noun *praeda, ae* meaning "*spoil*", "*benefit*", "*profit*" can be identified. It seems more probable to connect the next part, ne- with the base as well and to interpret it as *praedonae* "*robbers*", "*plunderers*". In this case, the *vulgo* name of the Abodriti can be interpreted as *"the robbers from the surroundings*", "*the plunderers from Dacia situated near by the Danube* [= Dacia at the Danube]*"*. Therefore, the "*popular*" name of this population was reduced to "*the ones who plunder*" and **praed Onaecentes* was transformed by Einhard into **Praed Enecentes.*

The ethnonyms *Abodriti* and *Osterabtrezi* are official ones. However, do we have to continue to believe that the first one means "*the ones who live at the (River) Oder*" and prove that it was used by the Slavs from the Danish border of the Empire to the Middle Danube? Not as far as "*the Osterabtrezi*" are concerned. It was artificially made up and maintained for them in order to create the impression that it always concerned "*Slavic tribes*" of the same name. However, other opinions have also been expressed about the name Abodriti (=Nortabtrezi). L. Niderle believes that the name is derived from the name of a hypothetical tribal chieftain – Bodro, and A. Hilferding thinks that it comes from *люди бодрие*. E. Moshko suggests that it can be derived from the word *bodro* meaning "*valley, depression*" (САЛИВОН 1981, 137). The annals mentioned them in 795 as Abodriti and it was accepted that they were identical with the Obodriti mentioned by medieval written sources (HERMANN 1995, 44). A. Salivon believes that *Obodriti* and *regnum Obodritorum* are ethnicons, i.e. names given by another people and self-denominations. The population was mainly Slavic. German medieval writers believed that the people living at the *Laba* (Elbe) river were a "*bloodthirsty tribe*" (Adam von Bremen) or *"Slavic robbers" (latrunculi Sclavorum)* (ХЕЛЬМХОЛЬД I, 85). I mention only these negative comments concerning the Obodriti because they correspond to the meaning of the byname of the Eastern Abodriti. Apparently the ethnicon Obodriti – Abodriti was used since early times as a synonym of a community, whose occupation was robbery and because of this, it was given additional names such as *latrunculi* and *praedenecenti*.

However, it seems more important to outline the small but significant difference between the record of the ethnicon from the Elbe region and the one from the Frankish annals. The latter, no matter whether it concerned the "*Northern*" (Nortabtrezi) or the "*Eastern*" (Ostabtrezi), was recorded as Abodriti. It seems that the form Obodriti was the name with which the Slavs living in the Elbe region called themselves. The Frankish pronunciation misinterpreted it by replacing the sound "*O*" with "*A*" as a result of reconsidering of its meaning in Latin.

The change in the pronunciation of the name of the Obodriti, living along the Elbe river, and its application to the Praedenecenti, inhabiting the areas at the Danube, was a result from the similar role they played in Frankish policy. In 795 the Obodriti took part in the Frankish war against the Slavs-Viltsi (ХРЕСТОМАТИЯ 1987, 249). Einhard notes under 798 that they "*always helped the Franks and for this reason they were considered allies*". Living next to the Northeastern limits of the Frankish Kingdom, they were at war with the Saxons, Danes or other Slavs. In other words, in the

[5] The Savaria region (Northwestern Hungary), where according to the author's belief there was an immigration of population from the East European steppes, has nothing to do with the region inhabited by the Praedenecenti. Besides, it does not become clear how the, in G. Vékony's opinion, Slavic population was perceived by other people such as the Onogurs – Wangari.

late 8th and the early decades of the 9th centuries the Obodriti were used as a bridgehead for outposts and offensive without being formally included within the boundaries of the Empire.[6]

Transformed from this point of view, the ethnonym Obodriti was given the preposition for place ab (a) ("*from, at, to, from the side*") instead of the initial "*O*". The unchanged part -bodriti (-odriti) resembles the modern English word border (after the metathesis of the middle consonants). It was introduced in the English language in ca. the mid-14th century from the French word **bordure*, which originates from the Frankish word **bord* meaning "*side*" or "*edge*", i.e. an edge of something. The Frankish word itself is derived by linguists from Proto-Germanic **bordus* meaning the same. Therefore, the word **abord(iti)* describes the location of the Frankish allies "*on the edge of their kingdom*". Besides, the word **bord* is an equivalent of the concept of "*border area*" **march "mark"* (from Proto-Indo-European **mereg*), which has a similar meaning: "*edge*".

For Einhard Abodriti (instead of Obodriti) it is a *terminus technicus* and he uses it for the allies living beyond the Frankish border in "*the two Pannoniae*" as well. It was the role of the population living there as protectors of the borders of the Empire that was the actual reason to call it Abodriti and not its probably Slavic original name. The author of *The Bavarian Geographer* used the same approach. The term-ethnonym Abtrezi used by him is a result of the "*Germanization*" of the Latin name of the population living at the German state.[7] In order to differentiate the people living at the Danish border from the people at the Bulgar one, he adds a definition related to their location – Nort- (for those inhabiting territories opposite the northern edge of the Empire) and Oster- (for those inhabiting territories opposite the Empire's eastern limits) respectively. The latter has to be regarded a serious argument in favour of the fact that Einhard's Abodriti-Praedenecenti had lived at the eastern and not only on the northern bank of the Danube. It has to be accepted as a final argument that the population in question had also lived in the territories facing the eastern bank of the Danube (*Fig. 4. 2*).

In conclusion I would like to point out that the Avar-Slavic or other population along the Tisza and the Middle Danube in the 9th century was named by the Frankish analysts as Abodriti, but it was known to its neighbors to the west as Praedenecenti, i.e. the robbers living to the east of their country. While the first name has a geopolitical meaning and fits the Frankish border nomenclature, the second one is based on an old tradition for the people inhabiting the territories along the Danube. Here is the description left by Ammianus Marcellinus (XVII. 12, 2) at the end of the 4th century: "*These tribes (– Sarmatians and Quadi, mingled and united as a result of their neighbourhood and similarity in customs and armour) are more fitted for pillaging raids (ad latrocinia magis) than a straightforward battle ..." (*Либи 1958, 118). "*The two Pannoniae and Moesia Superior"* were exposed to their attacks. The historian also defines (XIX. 6, 8) Quadi and Sarmatians as *"tribes, which were very skilful in robbery and plundering, have extended their attacks over a vast territory and kidnapped men, women and livestock" (ad raptus et latrocinia gentes aptissimae, praedas hominum virile et muliebre secus agebant et pecorum)* (Либи 1958, 155). Writing about the subjects of Mundo, a well-known early 6th century military commander, Jordanes (Get. 301) describes them as *"a multitude of thieves, scamps and robbers" (abactoribus, scamarisque et latronibus*) (Либи 1958, 367). According to Jordanes, Mundo's actions were based on *ritu praedesque, "brigandish habit"* and he himself traced his descent to Attila, "*Attilanis descendes*".

The latter can be accepted as an important indication for the final decision on the question about the byname Praedenecenti. The form descendes meaning "*descendents*" is similar in phonetic composition to the second part of the name, so it seems possible that it might have been used for creating the rare name of the population "*occupied with plundering*" along the eastern border of the Roman Empire. Furthermore, according to Jordanes, the Hun "*descendant*" Mundo was of Gepidic origin and Ennodius (XII) described him as a general, under whose command was *"the unruly Bulgar youth"* (Либи 1958, 301). He, as stated by Jordanes (Get. 300–301), *"was wandering across uncultivated and uninhabited lands"* "*beyond the Danube*", i.e. to the north of the Gepidic domain around Sirmium. It becomes clear from this text that Mundo's "*robbers*" actually operated in the southern part of the territory between the Danube and the Tisza. The fortress taken by them was called Herta (Arabian Hirta "*camp*"?) and was situated on the bank of the Danube; it could be identified with the earthen fortification situated at the confluence of the Tisza and the Danube (Fiedler 1986, 457–458,

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6 For a similar "*band*" of the Frankish Kingdom with the Sorbians (limes Sorbicus) see Ronin 1987, 100.

7 This pronunciation of the ethnonym seems to be a result of its rationalization and conversion to German. In relation to this, see the meaning of the modern verb *treusein "*to be faithful (loyal)*" as well as the adjective *treu "*faithful, loyal*".

Abb. 1). So it seems quite possible that the troops with which Mundo "*plundered his neighbours*", were predecessors of the 9th century Abodriti-Praedenecenti. In this case, we can assume that the name had a prototype in the byname of a Sarmatian, Germanic or Hun-Bulgar population "*occupied with robbery*" in the Middle Danube region in the 4th–6th centuries. Indications for this can be found in the names of some Sarmatian tribes from the region such as *Amicenses, Picenses*, etc., all of them having the component–censes in their names. It seems probable that it was not just a suffix but a concept derived from the Latin centum "*a hundred*" or centeni, ae "*multiplied by hundred*". In this case the actual meaning of the byname **Praedonaecenti* is "*the brigandish centuriae*". It is known that the so-called decimal system was used in the military organization of many ethnic groups, but was particularly typical of the social organization and tribal nomenclature of Turkic tribes (Pohl 2002, 164, Anm. 11–13; Георгиев 2004, 69). Although often omitted, an important piece of information provided by Theophylact Simocatta (VI, 4) reveals that the Bulgar military contingents in the Avar Khaganate were divided into "*centuriae*" (*ἑκατόντάσι*) (Гиби 1959, 334–335). With view to this, it seems probable that the byname, used by Einhard to designate/describe a militarized population living on the territory between the Danube and the Tisza and occupied with robbery on its neighbours, had a Late Antique origin. Its meaning corresponds to the combination of the words *praedatorii globi Gothorum* used by Ammianus Marcellinus (XXXVI. 4, 5) (Либи 1960, 144).

The military potential of the Abodriti-Praedenecenti

The information provided by *The Bavarian Geographer* concerning the Osterabtrezi reveals that there were *"more than 100 fortresses (civitas)"* on their territory. It is a well known fact, of course, that the figures provided by this written source are not very reliable. In spite of this, the large number is very impressive, especially compared to the number of the fortresses – only five – on "*the vast territory of the Bulgar Khanate*". Apparently, the domain of the Osterabtrezi was regarded a very well fortified one in the 9th century and it was this point the author wanted to stress.

Related to the situation on the territory between the Danube and the Tisza, this conclusion suggests that these fortifications were not very solid and were probably made from wood, wood and clay or constructed of lighter materials. Therefore some of them can be identified, although hypothetically, with the "*towns*" existing on this territory according to the information provided by Gesta Hungarorum: Unograd, Eger, Zemlingrad (present-day Zemplin), Szabolcs, Sárvár (Clay(?) fortress), Szolnokgrad, Alpár, Cserngrad, (present-day Csongrád), Titel (on the confluence of the Tisza into the Danube), etc. Some of them, as attested by the chronicles, were under the power of the Bulgar dux Salan governing in the late 9th century (Коледаров 1979, 18, 20–21, Maps 3–4). However, this data has not been confirmed by archaeological excavations so far (Сьоке 1989, 105–106).

"*The hundred fortresses*" of the Osterabtrezi is probably a summarized reflection of a historical reality. It seems similar to "*the hundred mounds*" erected by king Slav (khan Asparukh's predecessor) in present-day Dobrudzha and described in the 11th century Bulgarian Apocryphal Chronicle (Иванов 1970a, 281–282). The excavations revealed that "*mounds*" (=kurgans) were in fact fortified structures, most probably earthen ones, similar to the camps related to the so-called Big earthen rampart in Dobrudzha (Георгиев 2006, 54). However, the myth about "*the hundred fortresses*" was popular not only in present-day Northeastern Bulgaria and Southeastern Romania but along the Prut river (Northeastern Romania) and also in present-day Hungary. Almost everywhere on these territories the myth was popular in regions where earthen fortified structures were probably built as early as Late Antiquity and were used in the Early Middle Ages as well by various "*barbarian*" ethnic groups. It is attested in Pest County in Hungary. G. Fehér believes that the description in Gesta Hungarorum "*terram a civitate Atthile regis usque ad centum montes*" concerns exactly this area (Фехер 1925, 75). Other Magyar chronographers call this place Zazholm, i.e. "*a hundred hills (mounds)*". Similar oikonomic data from Nagy-Küküllő County is cited by G. Fehér (there is a village in this county, whose old Hungarian name was Százholm (*German* Hundertbüheln, *Transylvanian* Hundrubechiu), i.e. "*the hundred hills*". According to J. Melich the digit "*hundred*" was used to express the concept of "*multitude (large number)*". I believe that it was used to describe the existence of "*a large number*" of fortified structures.

It is worth pointing out that the mythological written and toponymic information regarding "*a hundred hills*" in Hungary is related to a certain extent to the region between the Carpathians

and the Danube. The names of the rivers in the rock salt resources area in the Carpathian Basin Kis- (=Small) and Nagy- (=Large, Big) Küküllő, which have given the name of the county there, originate from a word meaning "*thorny*", Tarnava in Slavic (Фехер 1925, 73). It recalls the "*thorny bushes*" on the ramparts of earthen fortified structures, especially in West Europe (Napoli 1997, 39). It was the usual way to mark the so-called thorny boundary between medieval domains in Gaul for example. The famous Avar hrings were also enclosed by a hedge (*hegin*) as attested by the "*Monk of St. Gall*" (Либи 1960, 284).

Traces of earthen fortified structures were found in the Carpatian Basin in Banat, the Great Alföld, Bachka and on the right bank of the Körös river (Napoli 1997, 292–308, Fig. 195, 203, 205; Fiedler 1986, Abb. 1; *Fig. 4. 1*). The ones in the Western Carpathians are the longest and consist of several North–South oriented defensive lines (at a distance of 3–25 km from each other), situated between the mountain and the plain. The northernmost point they have been discovered is the Tisza valley (north of Debrecen) and the most southern one – the Danube and Banat. The ditch in these structures is situated to the east; the earthen rampart yielded remains of wooden constructions at some places. A defensive construction, more than 60 km long, consisting of a ditch and a rampart is situated in the Great Hungarian Plain, to the north of Budapest, between the Danube and the Tisza. The ditch and the rampart lie across the slopes of the hills. There is another defensive line in front of their most eastern third. The ditches of both defensive lines lie to the north and block the access to the territory between the Danube and the Tisza from the north. A defensive line was discovered in Bachka. It is also oriented West–East and lies several kilometers away from the left bank of the Danube, facing the river. It seems contemporary to the defensive line in the Great Hungarian Plain since both were aimed at providing security for the territory between the Tisza and the Danube. Together with the natural protection provided by the two large rivers, the defensive facilities enclosed a territory, protected from all sides. In its eastern end an earthen barrier was erected to block a territory between the Danube and the Tisza, triangular in shape. Within this protected territory was also the town of Titel considered one of the last centers of the Avar Khaganate and mentioned in Gesta Hungarorum as a key point of the Bulgar power under the leadership of dux Salan in his struggle against Árpád's Magyars.

The earthen fortification structures to the east of the Middle Danube were given folk names in Hungarian and Slavic – "*Ördögárok*" and "*Csörsz-árok*" – meaning "*ditch of the Devil*". The archaeological excavations proved that the mid-9th century was their *terminus ante quem*. These structures were excavated mainly on the territory of Hungary by V. Balás, É. Garam, P. Patay, S. Soproni and other Hungarian archaeologists, who dated them to the 4th century. They are interpreted as an advanced defensive line (*Vorlimes*) of the Sarmatian tribes, constructed as a protection from the east, ca. 200 km away from the Middle Danube Roman limes, against attacks of the Goths and Gepids. S. Soproni relates the rampart at the Körös river to the Gepids in the mid-4th century. Romanian archaeologists tend to date them to an earlier part of the Roman period. 25 years ago U. Fiedler made an attempt to examine them as part of the earthen ramparts system constructed by the First Bulgarian Kingdom (Bulgar Khanate) (Fiedler 1986, 460). Recently, Romanian archaeologists working in Transylvania have accepted their Late Roman origin and belonging to the Sarmatians, but consider them, as well as some Hungarian archaeologists (I. Bóna and others), an eastern border line of the Avar Khaganate (Cosma 2003, 28–29, Note 32). In the 9th century the territory west of the Carpathians as far as the Middle Danube was within the boundaries of the First Bulgarian Kingdom. Excavations in Transylvania revealed in the foothills of the Carpathians and to the east from the "*Sarmatian ramparts*" a concentration of settlements and cemeteries dated to the 8th–10th centuries, which belonged to a population, whose material culture was similar to that of the Avars, Slavs and Danubian Bulgars (Cosma 2003, 30, Tabl. III. 1–2).

The majority of specialists believe that the earthen rampart system along the Middle Danube was established in Late Antiquity. However, this does not mean that it was not reused, reconstructed, renovated and complemented during the following centuries, especially between 626 and 805 by the Avars and probably by the Bulgars in the 9th century. It seems that the defensive ring (or at least the concept of it) bordered by the Tisza, the Middle Danube and the defensive lines in Great Hungarian Plain and Bachka was a result of the defensive facilities constructed to protect the political centers of the Avar Khaganate (hring?) (*Fig. 4. 1*).

If this hypothesis is true, the Avar-Slavic or other population, called by Einhard Abodriti-Praedenecenti, controlled this defensive region in the period after the end of the centralized Avar Khaganate. The region has all the typical features of a fortified **Bord*, aimed against the Bulgar expansion in the West Carpathians. By 805 the defensive line in the foothills of the West Carpathians must have been taken by the army of khan Krum. In 811–813

the remaining "*Avar*" military forces were involved in resisting the Byzantine threat against the Bulgar Khanate and after that in khan Krum's military campaign in Eastern Thrace. The available data on local "*principalities*" existing in the western part of the former territory of the Khaganate reveal[8] that most likely they survived until 822. It was probably not a coincidence that in the same year representatives of the Praedenecenti living to the east of the Danube sent a delegation to Louis the Pious. Shortly before this event, the Bulgars started actions aimed at annihilating the fortified area between the Tisza and the Danube because it blocked their way to the Middle Danube and the direct contacts with the Frankish Empire and the Slavs living in the Central Europe. All these circumstances provide grounds to define the Abodriti-Praedenecenti living in the 830s as a population that remained after the disintegration of the former Avar Khaganate and gravitated to the Frankish Empire, but after 832 passed under the political custody of the First Bulgarian Kingdom.

Translated by Tatiana Stefanova

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[8] In my opinion the nature of the tumuli at loca Avarorum along the so-called dividing line between Savaria and Carnuntum mentioned in a Bavarian document dated to 808 is not clear enough (Pohl 2002, 202, 322). It is believed that these were burial mounds (Grabhügel), although a possibility should not be excluded that the written source hinted to some kind of fortified structures in this area.

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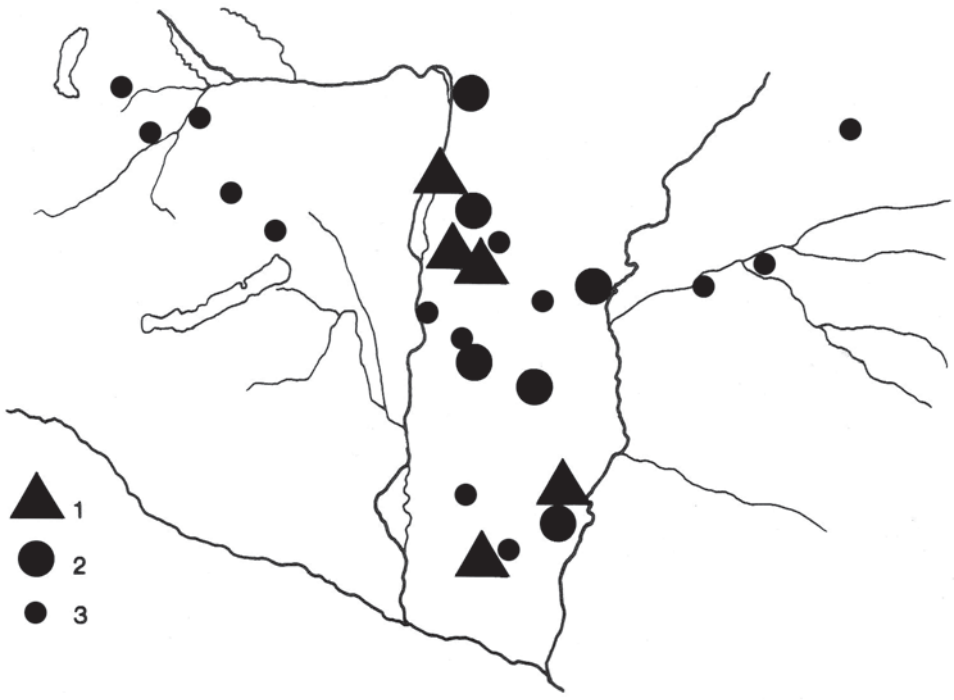

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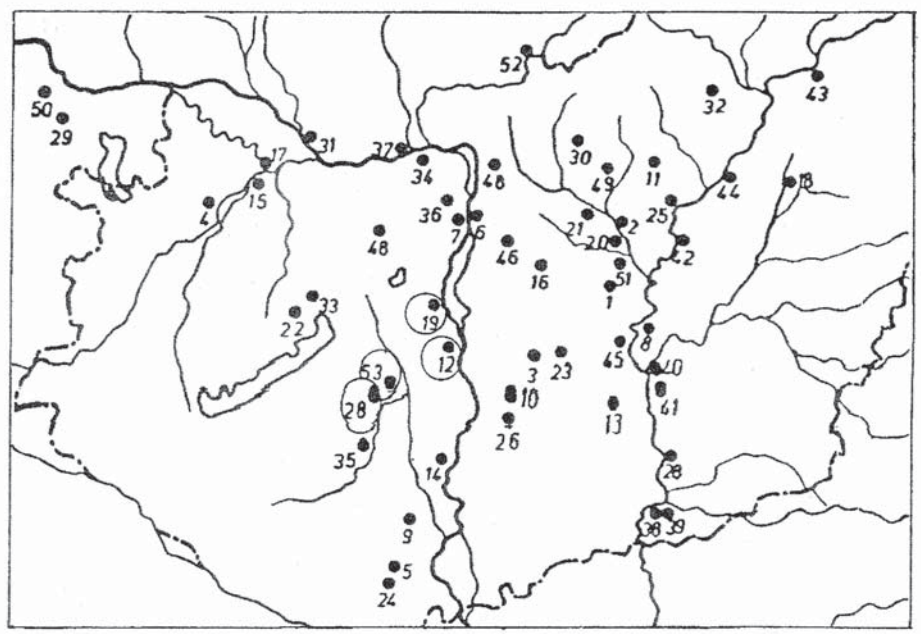

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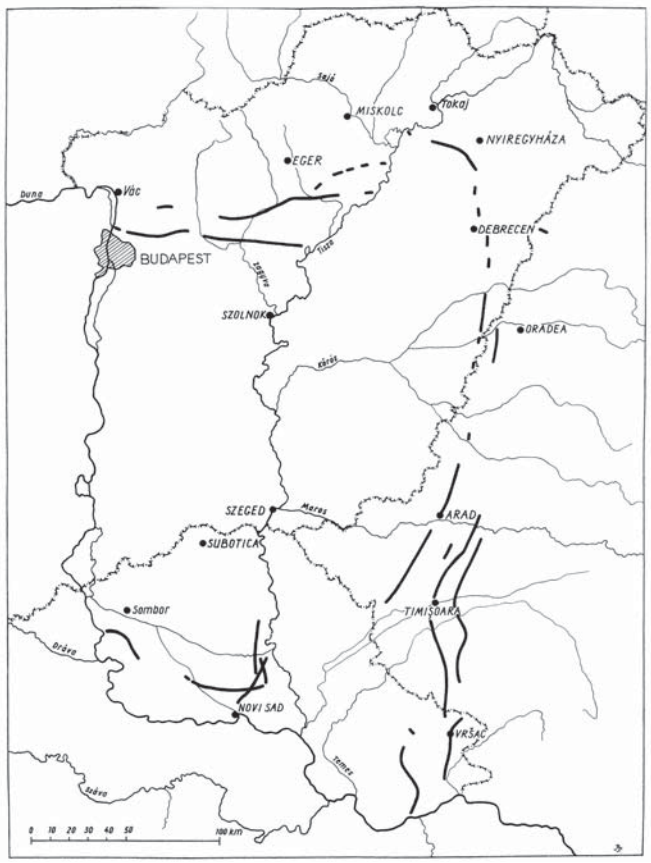
Fig. 3: 1: Map of the burials yielding skeletons with mongoloid anthropological features in the Carpathian basin (after Kiss 1995). 1. Early Avar period, 2: Middle Avar period, 3: Late Avar period; 2. Map of the archaeological sites dated back to the Middle Avar period in present-day Hungary (after Garam 1978; Palijeb 2007)



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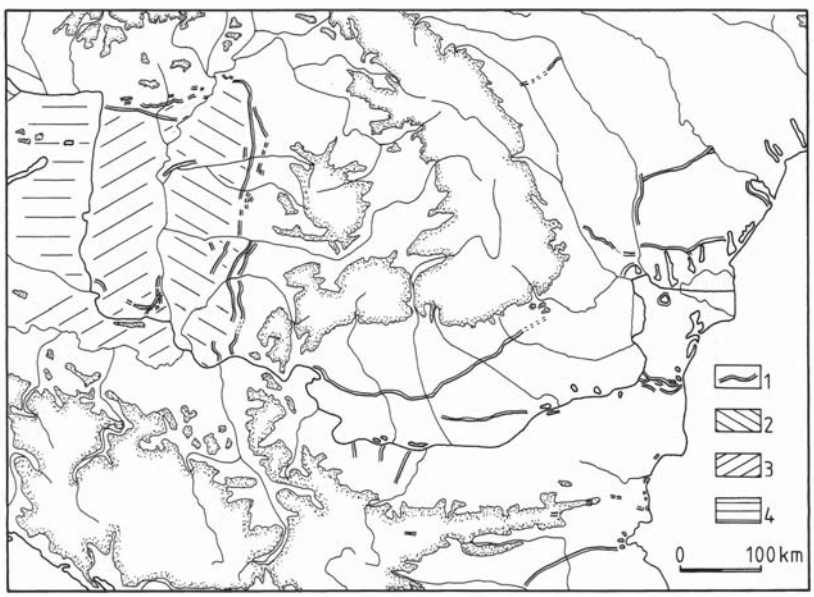

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Fig. 4: 1: Earthen linear defensive structures along the Middle Danube (after BALÁS 1963);
2: Territory inhabited by the Abodriti-Praedenecenti after 796: 1. Earthen linear defensive structures dated back to the Late Antique period (after FIEDLER 1986), 2. Territories conquered by the Bulgars in 803–805, 3. Territories dominated by the Bulgars in 827–831, buffer zone of the Bulgar Khanate after 832, 4. Territory (buffer zone) of the Frankish Empire after 832

THE KUNÁGOTA SWORD-GUARD AND TWO BRONZE MATRICES FOR SWORD-HILT MANUFACTURE FROM IRAN

Valeri Yotov

In 1926 a sword with a bronze sword-guard from Kunágota (Békés County, Southeast Hungary) was published by F. Móra (Móra 1926, 123–135) the remarkable researcher and director of the Szeged Museum (*Fig. 1*).[1] In several articles published by Hungarian specialists in recent decades, this interesting artifact (its sword-guard being the main issue commented upon) was defined as not being typical for the Carpathian territory and was subsumed under a group of swords regarded as being of Byzantine origin (Bakay 1967, 172; Bálint 1991, 110, Abb. 31; Kiss 1997).

The sword was discovered in a destroyed grave together with a couple of stirrups, two earrings and a solidus of the Byzantine Emperor Romanos I (920–944) (*Fig. 2*). Both the grave and the cemetery are dated, beyond any doubt, to the period between 930s and 950s (Kovács 1993, 46, 51).

Until now the Kunágota sword, and the sword-guard especially, were not compared to artifacts similar in shape (Bálint 1991, 110).[2] This has also been noted in the analytical work of A. Kiss (Kiss 1997, 200).

During a visit to the Institute of Archaeology in Budapest, and due to the kind help provided by Hungarian colleagues, I had the opportunity of getting acquainted with articles and books by the English researcher D. Nicolle on medieval arms and armour. In the chapters discussing the Byzantine Empire, together with a large number of artifacts, he presents two bronze matrices for the manufacture of sword-hilts: one of them now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (*Fig. 3. 3*) and the other from a private collection (*Fig. 3. 2*). Both are believed to have come from Iran. D. Nicolle wrote that both artifacts are dated to the 12th–13th to 14th centuries, but he also drew attention to the fact that "*the dating of these objects is very difficult*" (Nicolle 1999, Kat. Nr. 543-a, 676; Nicolle 2002, Kat. Nr. 29-A, 30).

The Kunágota sword-guard has several main typical features – a high sleeve, cylindrical in shape, of the upper section, arch-shaped levers and a sleeve with an ellipsoid bottom section. These characteristics are very close, indeed almost identical to, the shapes that the matrices would produce for the moulds and the manufactured artifacts. It is especially true for the matrix from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which has almost the same curves of the bottom part (the larger sleeve) and the palmette-shaped decoration on the upper part.

I am familiar with two typological schemes of Byzantine swords which I regard as unreliable or even subjective, mainly because they were based upon images in manuscripts and frescoes and not on real artifacts. Nevertheless I have to note that at this level of research the Kunágota sword-guard and the matrices for sword-hilts from D. Nicolle's catalogues are similar to Type 4 of Ada Bruhn Hoffmeyer's scheme based upon John Skylitzes's Madrid manuscript (*Fig. 4*) and Type 2 of Timothy Dawson's scheme, which is based upon images in medieval manuscripts, frescoes as well as stone and bone reliefs (*Fig. 5*). Among the numerous images collected by D. Nicolle there are several sword-guards, which seem similar to the studied artifacts, although the stylization does not enable us to be more specific (Nicolle 2002a, Figs. 93–94).

In his book "*Byzantinische Waffen*" T. Kolias shared his pessimistic opinion regarding the possibility of creating a more general typology of the various types of weapons and of swords in particular (Kolias 1988, 140).[3] On the one hand, this pessimism seems justified, but on the other, intensive communication and an exchange of information could provide better options in the future.

Having in mind that there is no more detailed information about the provenance of the matrices published in D. Nicolle's books (Iran in general?), I think that the comparison with the sword-guard from Kunágota will support a more precise date – namely the mid 10th century. A sword found during underwater excavations, and dated to the second half of 10th or the early 11th century (*Fig. 3. 1*), provides grounds to suggest that sword-guards similar

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1 The Szeged Museum is named after him (http://www.mfm.u-szeged.hu/index_english.php?id=museum-mora).

2 The comparison made by Cs. Bálint with the bronze sword-guard from Pliska published by S. Stanchev is incorrect, see Станчев 1955, 207, обр. 24.

3 T. Kolias notes that it is difficult to develop a typological scheme because of the low number of available artifacts.

in shape had already been used during the first half of the 11th century (Nicolle 2002, Kat. Nr. 28).[4]

In relation with the date again, it is worth remembering T. Kolias's well-supported opinion that "*when the longer sword (spatha) replaced the shorter sword (gladius), the short sword-guard was introduced in the beginning and after that it gradually became longer.*" According to T. Kolias, until the 10th century sword-guards were short and after the 11th century they gradually became longer.[5]

All three artifacts have to be related to the military culture of the East Roman Empire-Byzantium as it was also concluded by the Hungarian specialists about the Kunágota sword and by D. Nicolle about the matrices.

Translated by Tatiana Stefanova

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[4] http://www.diveturkey.com/inaturkey/serce/arsenal.htm#top

[5] „*Beim römischen Gladius war kaum eine Parierstange ausgebildet. Als die großen Schwerter den Gladius verdrängt hatten, setzte sich auch die Parierstange durch; anfänglich nur kurz ausgebildet, nahm sie an Länge allmählich zu… Ab dem 10.–11. Jahrhundert erfährt die Parierstange eine Verlängerung*" (Kolias 1988, 143).

Fig. 1: Swords and sword-guard from Kunágota, Grave 1

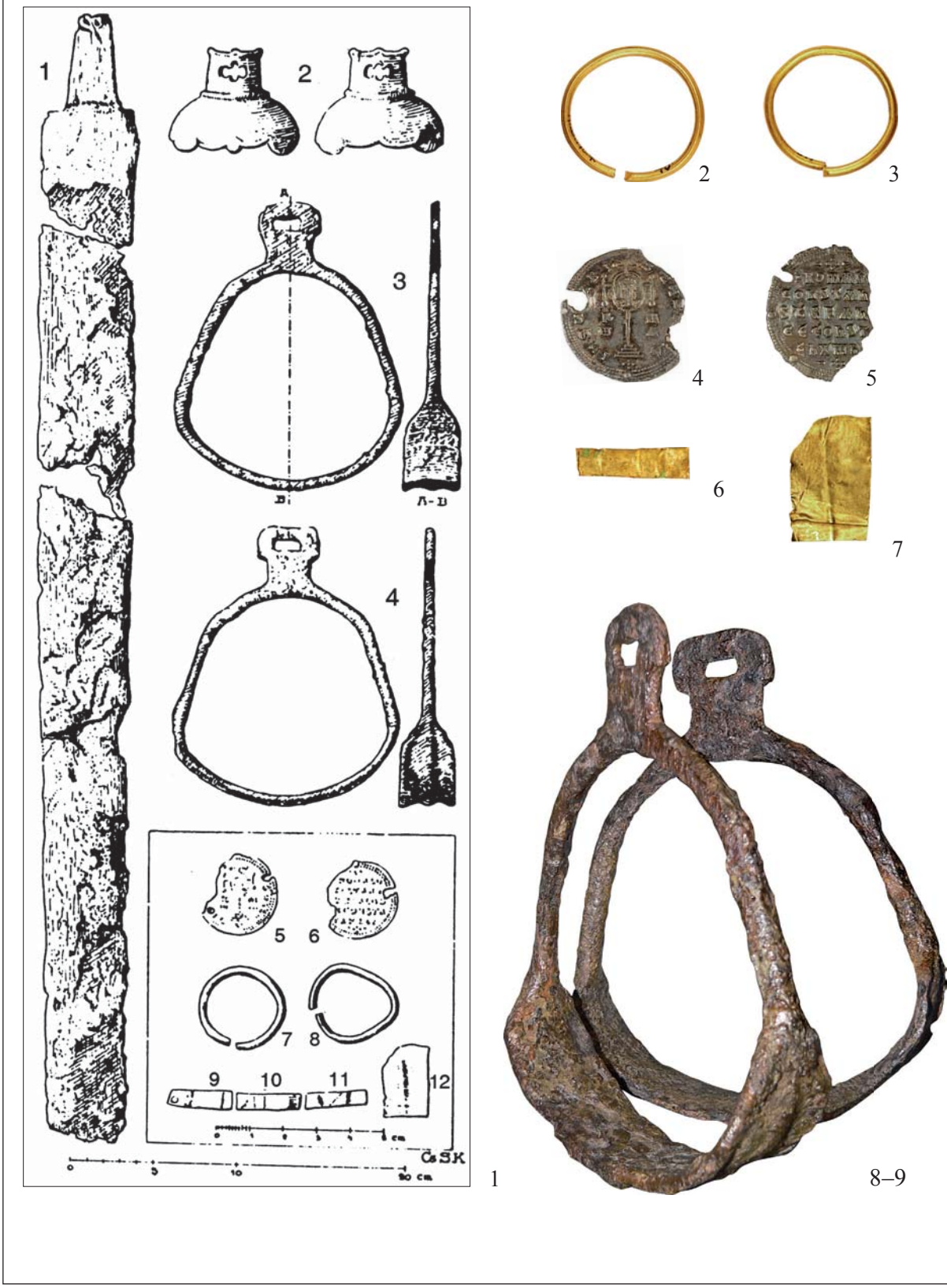
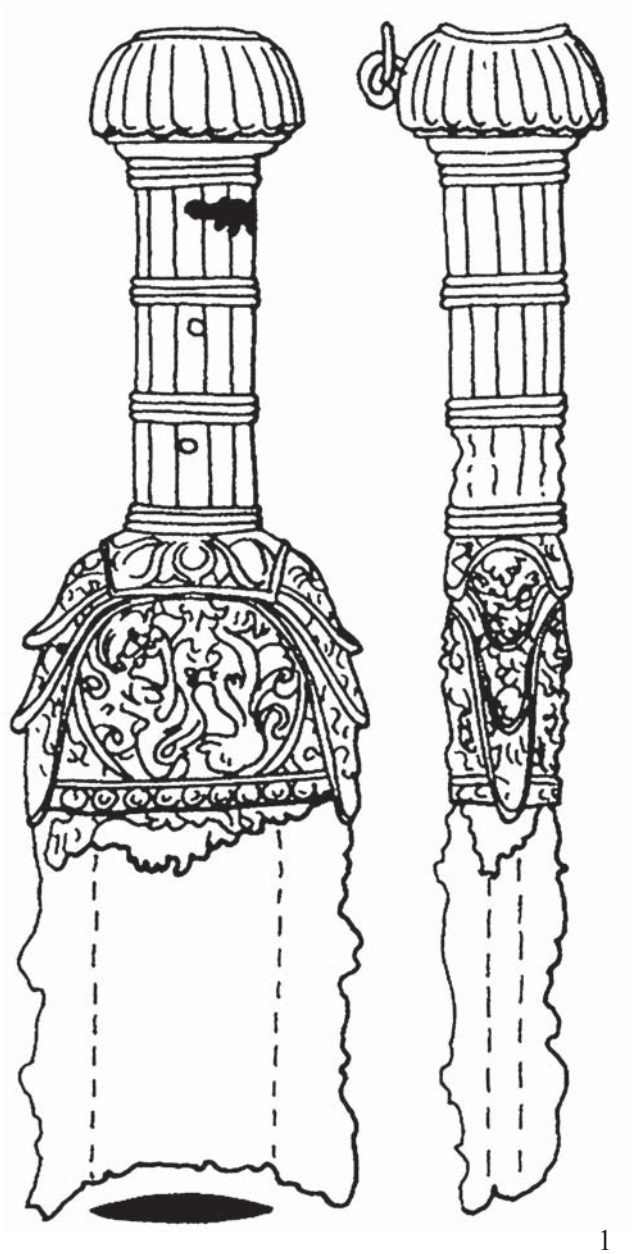


Fig. 2: Pieces found in Kunágota, Grave 1. (1. after Móra 1926)



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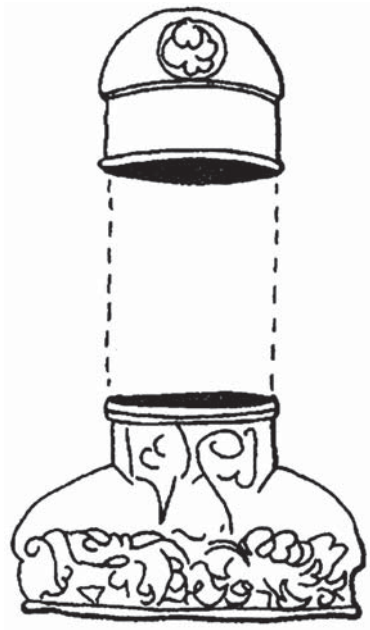

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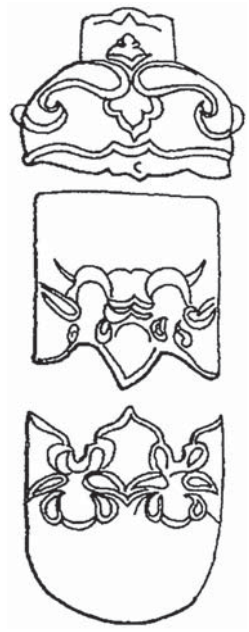

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Fig. 3: 1: Bronze sword-hilt from Serce liman shipwreck; 2: Bronze matrices for a sword hilt manufacturing (found in unknown place, now in a private collection); 3: Bronze matrices for a sword hilt manufacturing found in Iran at the Metropolitan Museum of Art

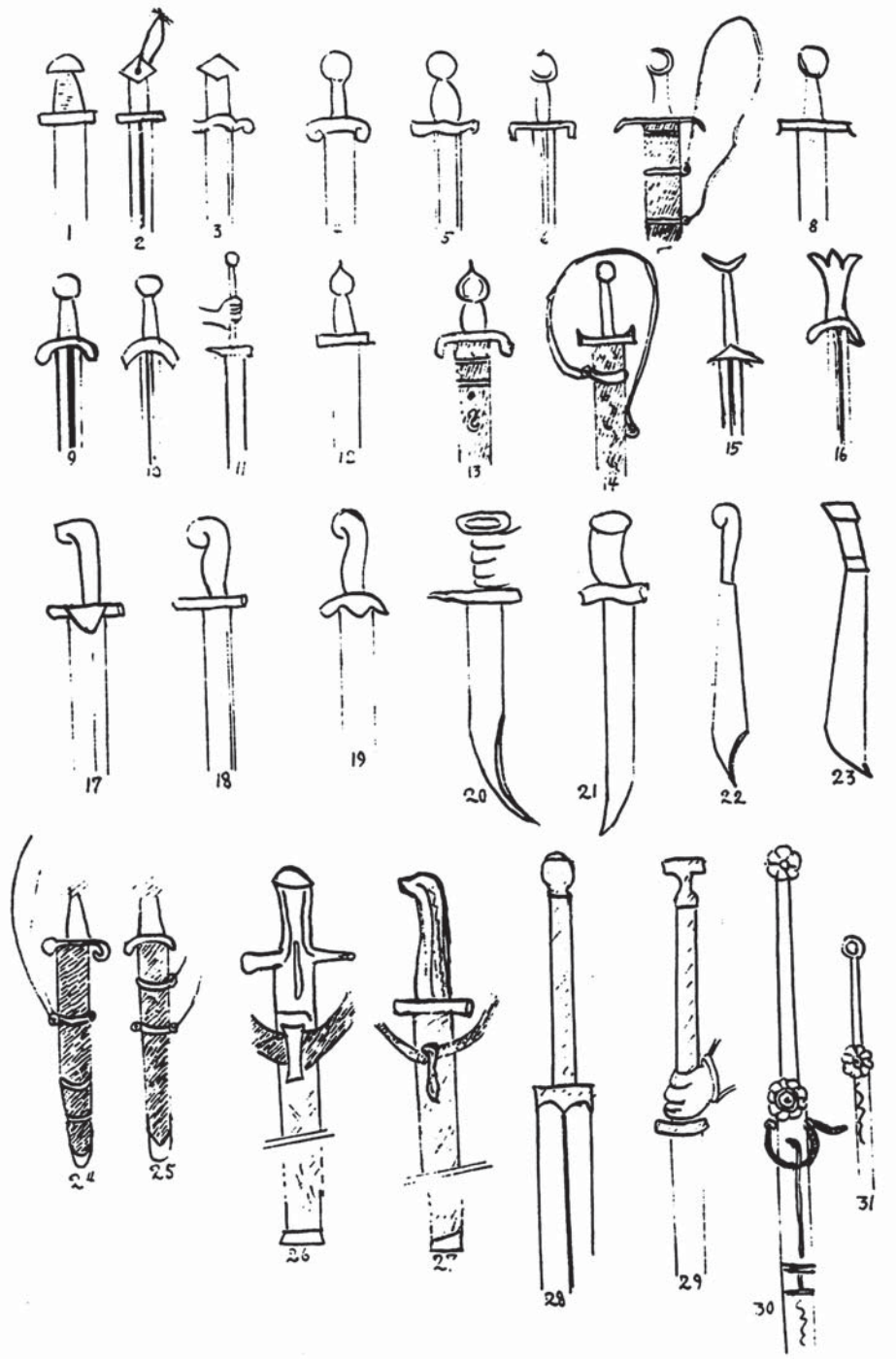

FIG. 16.—Nos. 1-25, sword types used by the Scylitzes-painters; no. 26, sword from rock-relief with triumph of Chapur I, 3rd cent. A. D.; no. 27, Persian silver plate with Chapur II, 4th cent.; no. 28, Palmyrenian stele 2nd century A. D.; no. 29, East Iranian silver bowl, 4th cent.; nos. 30-31, Turkestan caves 7th-8th cent.

Fig. 4: Completed by A. Bruhn Hoffmeyer typology according to John Skylitzes' Madrid manuscript (after HOFFMEYER 1966)

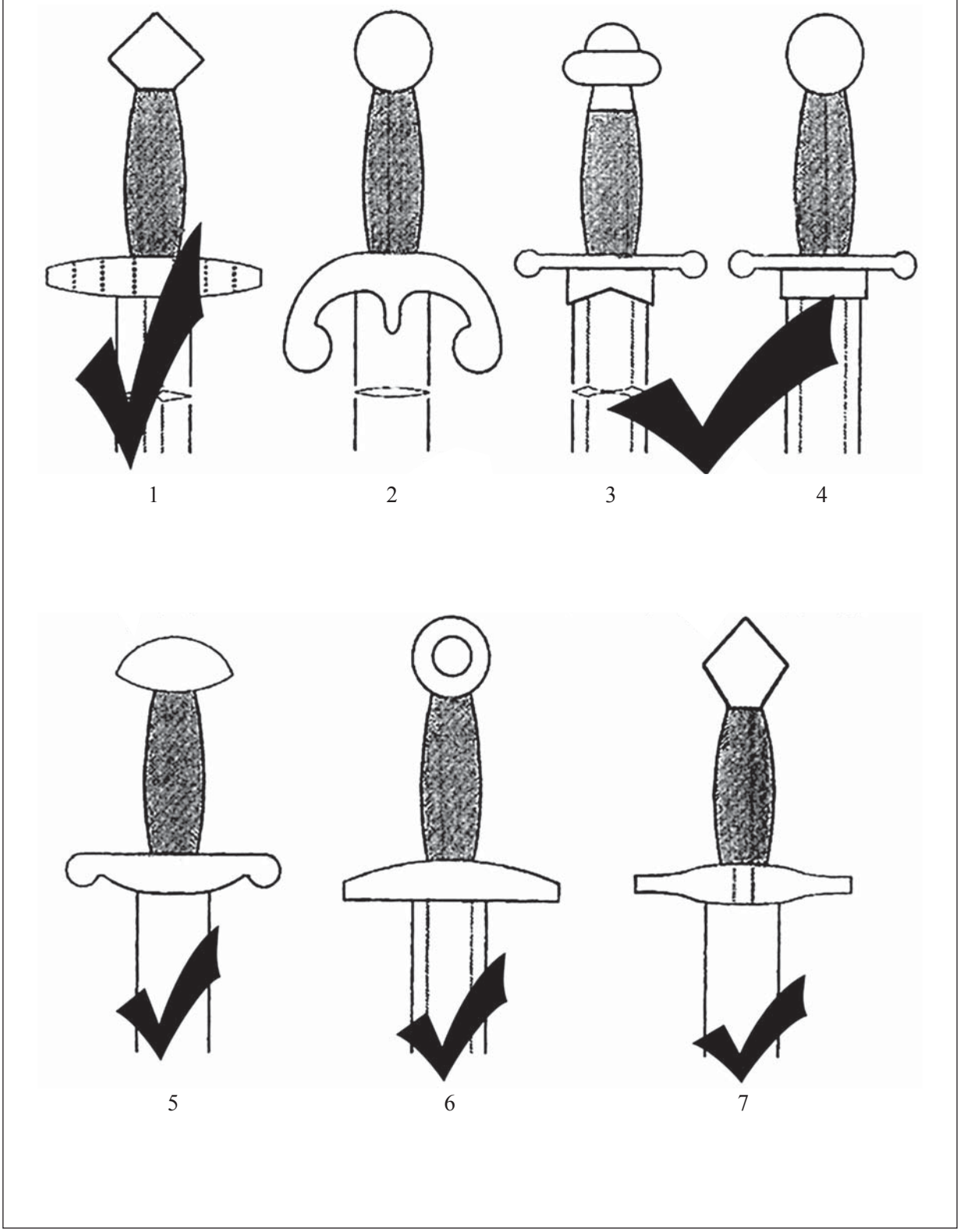

Fig. 5: Completed by T. Dawson typology according illustrations of Mediaeval manuscripts, church frescoes and ivory or stone reliefs (after Dawson 2007)

A NEW "HUNGARIAN" TYPE SABER FROM THE OUTSKIRTS OF PLISKA

Stela Doncheva – Boyan Totev

A saber found in the western part of the outskirts of Pliska entered the collection of the Shumen Historical Museum.[1] It is almost complete: the pommel of the handle, the saber-guard and the blade are preserved (*Fig. 1*). The entire length of the saber is 100 cm. The 80 cm long blade is thin and slightly curved. The handle, 20 cm long, is slanting to the blade and ends with a pear-shaped tip, which has a ring for attaching to the shoulder belt (*Fig. 2. 1*). The iron saber-guard is broadened in the middle; it is 9 cm long and its levers end with symmetrical diamond-shaped parts. The bottom section of the blade is protected by a metal plate covering both sides. The length of the saber point is 23 cm and the width of the blade is 2.2 cm.

The saber and belt set are completed by a spacer piece consisting of an iron ring and three plates hinged to it by rivets (*Fig. 2. 2*). It is hard to specify whether it is part of the shoulder belt or another part of the armour. A narrow, elliptically curved plate, whose edges are attached by a rivet clip to a ring for attaching to the belt, also belongs to the set (*Fig. 2. 3*). Similar to other early medieval sabers, there must have been two of these plates; however, in our case only one has survived. They were used for attaching the sheath to the equipment. According to the information provided by the people who found the artifact, there were two other semi-circular plates, used for attaching the leather straps (*Fig. 2. 4*), but it is not certain that they were part of the same set.

A similar saber was found near the village of Yarebitsa, Dulovo region (Кънев 2002, 119–122). Sabers, similar to the one described above, have been found at the early medieval settlement located on top of the Late Antique fortress of Debrene, Dobrich region (Йотов 1992, 141–145) and from the Popina castle, Silistra region. Five sabers have unknown provenances in Northeastern Bulgaria (Йотов 2004, 65–67, обр. 30–32, кат Nr. 456–461).

All elements described above provide grounds to define the weapon as a "Hungarian saber". These sabers are dated back to the late 9th–10th centuries and a great number of them were found in Southern Russia, Ukraine and Hungary (Schulze-Dörrlamm 1991, 394–401; Dienes 1996, 181–199; Йотов 1999, 183–191). This type of saber is dated by some specialists to the 10th–11th centuries (Корзухина 1950, 63–94). Following the analogy with the rest of the sabers found in Bulgaria, the one presented in this article has to be dated to the 10th rather than the 11th century. The good state of preservation and the fact that almost all elements of the set are present make us believe that the saber comes from a single grave or a cemetery in the outskirts of Pliska.

Translated by Tatiana Stefanova

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Fig. 1: Saber from Pliska

Fig. 2: 1: The handle of the saber from Pliska; 2: Belt separator of the saber from Pliska; 3: Elliptical plate and ring from Pliska used to attach the sheath to the equipment; 4: Semi-round plates from Pliska used to attach the leather strap

TOWARDS A CLASSIFICATION OF GRAVE TYPES AND BURIAL RITES IN THE 10TH–11TH CENTURY CARPATHIAN BASIN – SOME REMARKS AND OBSERVATIONS

Attila Türk

To the memory of Rasho Stanev Rashev (1943 – 2008)

Introduction

During the last 15–20 years, the archaeological investigation of the 10th–11th century Carpathian Basin has reached many significant results. This is mainly a consequence of the numerous rescue excavations, which resulted in many completely unearthed cemeteries. The many graves not only yielded grave-goods but also furnished valuable information regarding burial rites and grave types. There are some completely novel phenomena and also variants of the already well-known types.

A single earlier attempt (Tettamanti 1975) and a few recent studies[1] apart, there is no detailed and up-to-date survey of the grave types and burial rites practiced during the 10th–11th centuries in the Carpathian Basin. The present article would like to contribute to this by presenting a few phenomena which have received little or no attention so far. In my selection I concentrated on the archaeological heritage of Eastern Europe in the 7th to 11th centuries and especially on the cases showing similarities and analogies to the Saltovo cultural-historical complex. The topics discussed can be grouped in three major categories: burials into or under kurgans, then stepped grave pits, and graves with a sidewall niche and with a niche dug at the foot-end of the grave, and last but not least the classification of horse burials, which is of course closely related with both.

The question of kurgans

It is a widely held assumption regarding the general appearance of the cemeteries of the Hungarians arriving in 895 in the Carpathian Basin that those were (practically without exemption) only simple pit graves (Tettamanti 1975, 87–89).[2] It was well known, however, for Hungarian researchers that there were some burials, which were secondarily dug into earlier kurgans. Burials in or under an artificially constructed grave tumulus, however, were not considered to be characteristic for 10th century Hungarians,[3] although the practice has been noticed by many scholars (e.g. Tettamanti 1975, 88).

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1 Varga 2013; Bende–Lőrinczy–Türk 2013.

2 The absence of kurgans has been used as an argument first of all by Russian archaeologists in the interpretation of graves, which has been connected with the ancestors of the Hungarians on the east European steppe and forest steppe, e.g. in distinguishing Hungarian graves from those of the Pechenegs (Плетнёва 2003, 105, 107 and 123). Recently it has become apparent (e.g. in the case of Subotcy-type burials) that certain burial types are equally frequent in simple pits and in tumuli (Комар 2008, 216).

3 *"In some of the grave tumuli at Hencida, Ohat and Zemplén it is perhaps conceivable, that they belonged to ethnic groups, which were not of ugor-magyar origin."* (Tettamanti 1975, 88; László 1944, 158–161).

Graves dug into earlier kurgans

There is an increasing number of known cases from the Hungarian Conquest Period, where the upper part of an artificial tumulus was used secondarily for later burials. In such cases, however, it is not easy to decide, whether the emerging hill is an artificial or a natural one, because most of these kurgans are not excavated properly and entirely. A further incertainty is caused, if it is not known, whether it contained one or more burials.[4] The use of grave tumuli has been traditionally connected with the general principle, that the Hungarians conquering the Carpathian Basin usually buried their dead on hills or such places, which were protected from groundwater and floods (Tettamanti 1975, 88). This seems to be borne out by the fact, that the majority of kurgan graves from this period is known from the Great Hungarian Plain,[5] where there are only few natural heights. Moreover, it is exactly the Great Hungarian Plain, where according to the available evidence most kurgans have been destroyed by intensive agricultural activities. In those regions, where they are fortunately preserved,[6] the custom of tumulus burial has sometimes survived even until the 11th century (Langó–Türk 2004a, 205–206).

There are some cases, however, where there were no traces of a kurgan left, but special circumstances and observations during the excavation point to a secondary use of a tumulus for burial. In 2000 a few Sarmatian graves surrounded by rounded ditches were unearthed in the vicinity of Szeged (site Kiskundorozsma-Subasa M5 37 (26/78), see Bozsik 2003). Among the Sarmatian graves, there were several other ones dating from the Hungarian Conquest Period, three of which were found inside the Sarmatian ditch circles (*Fig. 1. 1a–b*). The excavators have pointed out that this particular placement is most probably due to the circumstance, that in the 10th–11th centuries the remains of the original, ca. 600 years older tumuli were still visible on the surface, and they were intentionally reused for the new burials. One has to add, however, that there is no consensus among specialists, whether the Sarmatian burials surrounded by ditch circles were indeed covered by a kurgan or not.[7]

Kurgans from earlier periods were most often used in the 10th–11th century on the Great Hungarian Plain; their greatest density is observable to the east of the Homokhátság (Southeast Hungary).[8] Nowadays we even know an example from Transdanubia

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4 Vö. Liska 1996, 183.

5 In the southern part of the Great Hungarian Plain, e.g. at Szeged-Székhalom (Kürti 1991, 55), and in its nothern part, e.g. at Hajdúszoboszló-Árkoshalom (Nepper 2002, I. 36. kép).

6 Kiszombor-C Nagyhalom, on the plot of Matuszka Györgyné and László Györgyné (Fehér et al. 48, No. 574; Kürti 1994, 380, No. 46; Tettamanti 1975, 86, 109). This piece of information has been confirmed by recent excavations in 2003, verifying the results of the late F. Móra (Langó–Türk 2004a, 204).

7 Some Hungarian researchers have interpreted the Sarmatian circular (and rectangular) ditches as tumulus burials (e.g. Vörös 1985, 154–157; Vaday 1989, 197). Others have not accepted this view, and assumed that the trenches played a certain role only in the funerary rites following the burial (e.g. Kulcsár 1998, 39). For a long time, the observations made by M. Kőhegyi at the Sarmatian tumuli and trenches in the cemetery of Madaras were considered to be decisive in this respect. According to his opinion, the ditches surrounding the tumuli are always uninterrupted, while graves surrounded by interrupted trenches did not have a tumulus (Kőhegyi 1971, 213). Cs. Balogh has recently called attention to the fact, that the distinction is not so clear cut, since we know Sarmatian graves with uninterrupted ditch circle, where there was certainly no tumulus above the grave (Balogh–Heipl 2010). On the other hand, there is at least one Sarmatian grave known (Pilis-Horgásztó, Feature 2), which had an interrupted surrounding ditch and a tumulus (the remains are 45–50 cm high) above it (Gulyás 2011).

8 Beside the above-mentioned Sarmatian barrows, prehistoric kurgans also often contain 10th century secondary burials, e.g. at Monaj (Erdélyi 2003, 29) or at Kunhegyes-Nagyszálláshalom (Erdélyi 2003, 26), each site yielding a single secondary burial. At the site of Békésszentandrás-Pálinkásérdűlő most of the 47 graves had been dug into the barrow (Erdélyi 2003, 8), while at the site of Buj-(Gyeptelek)-Táncsics M. TSz five similar graves were discovered (Erdélyi 2003, 11). Quite a few data from the recently published excavation notes of Gy. Kisléghi Nagy (Kisléghi 2010), who excavated numerous barrows in the southern Great Hungarian Plain at the turn of the 19th–20th centuries, confirm the role of barrows in the burial customs of the 10th–11th centuries, e.g. Bukovapuszta Tumulus II (1902) (Kisléghi 2010, 67−68); Bukovapuszta Tumulus IV (1903) (Kisléghi 2010, 95−96); Bukovapuszta Tumulus V (1904) (Kisléghi 2010, 69); Nagyősz-Nagykomlós (1898) (Kisléghi 2010, 28); Óbesnyő Tumulus I (1904) (Kisléghi 2010, 102); Puszta-Vizezsda, Tumulus X (1900) (Kisléghi 2010, 59–60). In the following cases we can suspect that the grave was dug into the fill of a kurgan: Nagyősz, Tumulus I (1898) (Kisléghi 2010, 27); Puszta-Vizezsda, Tumulus III (1901) (Kisléghi 2010, 62–63).

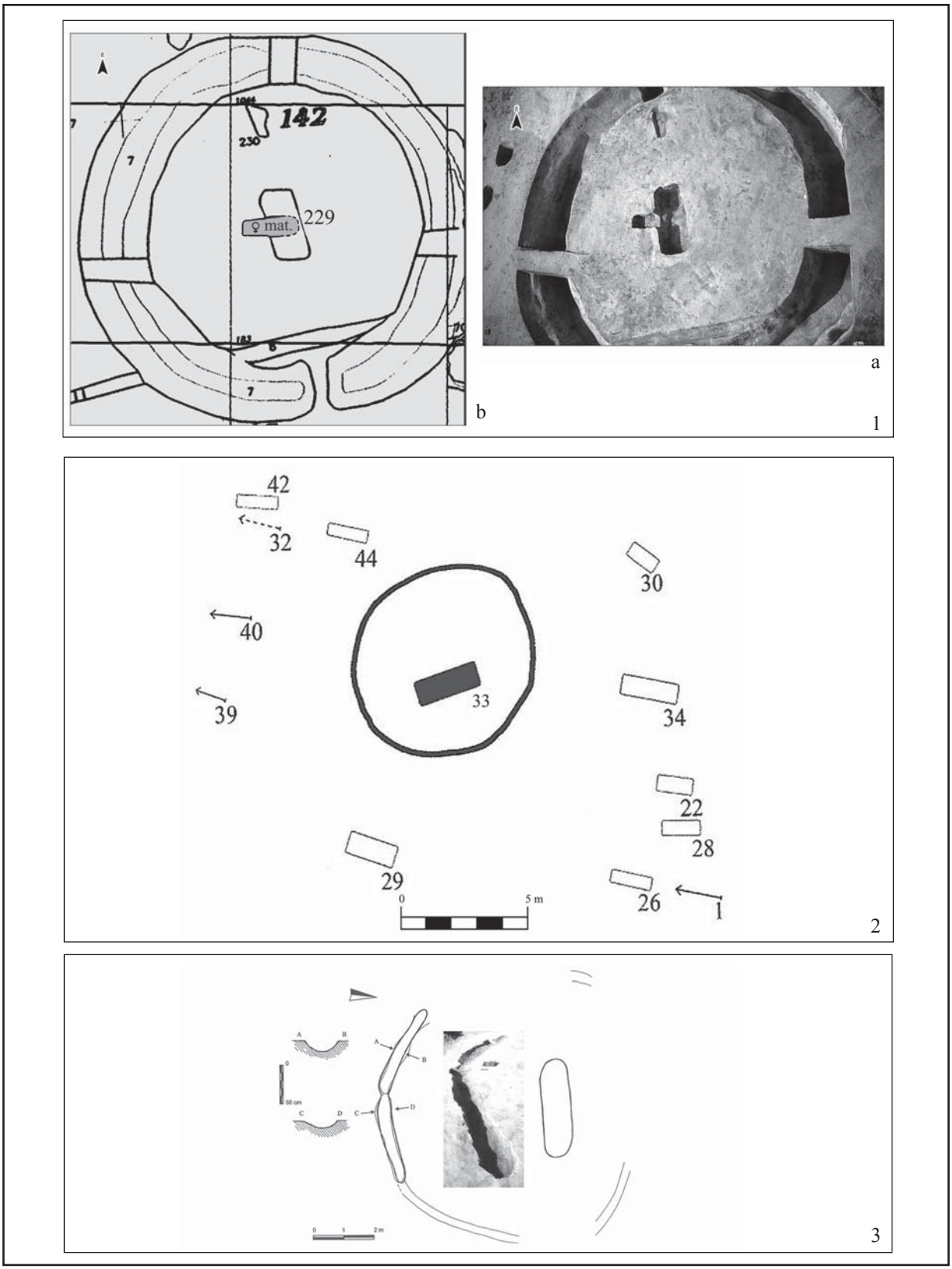

Fig. 1: 1: Graves dug into earlier kurgans in the Carpathian Basin of the 10th–11th centuries, Kiskundorozsma-Subasa, Grave 229 (after Bende–Lőrinczy–Türk *2013, 25. kép); 2–3: Burials under kurgans in the Carpathian Basin of the 10th–11th centuries, Törökszentmiklós-Szenttamáspuszta, Grave 33 and Szeged-Kiskundorozsma, Hosszúhát-halom, Grave 100 (after* Bende–Lőrinczy–Türk *2013, 26. kép)*

(e.g. at Kemenesszentpéter), where graves from the Árpad Period were dug into a tumulus of Roman date.[9] This case shows quite clearly, that sometimes even more graves were dug into the same kurgan. There are of course tumuli, which have been reused only once.[10]

Burials under kurgans

One has to begin with the statement of S. Tettamanti, who compiled the most complete list of the burial rites and grave types of the 10th–11th centuries in 1975: "*There are no kurgans known, which would have been constructed unquestionably in the 10th–11th centuries*" (Tettamanti 1975, 88). This statement holds true up to the present. But there are some cases, which were suspect in this respect,[11] and there is new archaeological evidence, which seems to confirm the use of this grave type. Grave 100 at Kiskundorozsma-Hosszúhát-halom was excavated in 1999 and published in 2002 (Bende et al. 2002). The grave was situated on a conspicuous point of a long sand dune and was surrounded by the traces of a ditch, 40–50 cm wide and 10–30 cm deep. This trench has been best preserved on the south side, the other parts were unfortunately almost completely destroyed by ploughing. The ditch originally had the sahpe of a circle of 9 m in diameter, and the grave, which had approximately the same depth, was situated inside the circular ditch in its southern part (*Fig. 1. 3*).

There are other graves surrounded by a ditch (so possibly covered by a kurgan) from the Conquest Period, e.g. at Nógrádsáp-Tatárka (Tárnoki 1982, 384; Erdélyi 2003, 31). The concise report mentions a circular ditch (60 cm wide and 40 cm deep) of 6.8 m diameter. A third example of this type has been excavated recently in a cemetery discovered in Szolnok County (Petkes 2011, 206).[12] The whole Grave 33 at Törökszentmiklós-Szenttamás had been surrounded by a circular ditch. Unfortunately, there are no data available on the depth of the ditch and of the grave. The diameter of the ditch is 6.6–7.2 m, and the trench itself is not interrupted anywhere, i.e. there are no traces of an entrance. The grave was placed to the south of the centre of the circle (*Fig. 1. 2*).

One can conclude at present, that graves surrounded by a circular trench in the 10th–11th centuries can be either solitary or separated burials (e.g. Kiskundorozsma-Hosszúhát-halom, Grave 100) or belong to a cemetery (e.g. Törökszentmiklós-Szenttamás Grave 33). It can be observed in addition, that the graves are not in the centre of the circular ditch, but to the south of it. In all three cases, the ditch formed a circle ca. 6–9 m in diameter, a fact which can only mean that the tumuli could not have been very high. They were bordered by a 40–60 cm wide and 10–40 cm deep ditch. The orientation of the entrenched grave at Törökszentmiklós was fitted into the lines of the other graves of the cemetery, a similarly to the one at Nógrádsáp.[13]

It is well known that the Hungarians, arriving and settling in the Carpathian Basin in 895, came from the east European region, where graves dug into kurgans were very common in many regions and periods of the Early Middle Ages. Moreover, this habit was widespread in those cultures, which show the closest analogies – at the present state of our knowledge – with the material record of the conquering Hungarians, i.e. in some of the Subotci type graves along the Middle Dnepr[14] and to the east, in the South Ural region, in the Kushnarenkovo and Karayakupovo cultures (Иванов 1999, таб. 1). Kurgans are found in addition in the southern

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9 MRT 4, Site 37/2 (cf. Csirke 2013). The fill of the kurgan was in this case clearly visible.

10 Kiskundorozsma-Subasa M5 37 (26/78), Feature 229 (*Fig. 1. 1*) (Bozsik 2003, Fig. 1; Bende–Lőrinczy–Türk 2013, 25. kép).

11 According to the excavation reports, the possibility of a kurgan burial has been considered in the following cases: Bodrogszerdahely; Bátorkeszi, Graves 4 and 5; Marcellháza, Grave 1; Hencida, Grave 5; Szabadegyháza; Ohat-Pusztakócs-Csattaghalom; Hajdúszovát-Hegyeshatárhalom and the grave from Zemplén (for further details and bibliography see Tettamanti 1975, 88).

12 Based on Gy. Kisléghi Nagy's excavation notes, especially on the height of the kurgans, the location of the (central) burial and the depth of the graves, interment under a mound can be assumed in the following cases: Bukovapuszta Tumulus III (1903) (Kisléghi 2010, 79); Bukovapuszta Tumulus VIII (1906) (Kisléghi 2010, 121); Nagykomlós Tumulus I (1898) (Kisléghi 2010, 23−24); Óbesnyő Tumulus V (1904) (Kisléghi 2010, 102).

13 Tverdohleby, Grave 1 (Приймак–Супруненко 1994); Dmitrivka, Barrow 1, Grave 2 (Супруненко–Маєвська 2007); Katerinovka, Kurgan 32, Grave 1–2 (Комар 2008, 216).

regions of the Saltovo cultural-historical complex in the form of the so-called "*kurgans with rectangular ditches*" (Афанасьев 2001, 53–54),[15] and there are plenty of examples from the 10th–14th centuries among the nomad burials in East Europe.

I think, therefore, that although burials in or below tumuli are not attested in great numbers, they were nonetheless surely practiced by the Hungarians. This habit was – similiarly to many other customs[16] – part of their eastern heritage.

Pit grave forms of the Hungarian Conquest period in the light of eastern analogies graves with a sidewall niche and with a niche dug at the foot-end in the Carpathian Basin of the 10th–11th centuries and in East Europe

Research on graves with a sidewall niche in the Carpathian Basin during the the 10th–11th centuries yielded significant results in the last few years. In 1975 only five occurrences of this type were known (Tettamanti 1975, 90), but in 2006 G. Lőrinczy and P. Straub already reported 16 sites in their study, in which they discussed all such graves of the Carpathian Basin of the Conquest and Early Árpad Periods (Lőrinczy–Straub 2006, 291–292). In 2007 S. Varga also collected all the occurrences of this form of grave pits and developed a typological system. (Varga 2013). As a result of his work, we now have data from 31 sites and 100 graves of this particular type. These figures not only reflect a growing interest for this subject, but also show that this grave type was much more frequently used during the 10th–11th centuries than recognized by previous scholars.

Sidewall niches are usually dug on the long sides of the grave, most often on the *southern* side (Type I) (*Fig. 2. 2–4*), less frequently on the *north* (Type II) (*Fig. 2. 1*).[17] Most recent excavataions show that there were also cases, where a small niche was dug at the shorter (eastern) side of the grave.[18] This latter type is well known and widespread in East Europe during the 8th–9th centuries as well. It is found in early Bulgarian cemeteries along the Middle Volga[19] and among the pit-graves of the Saltovo cultural-historical complex:[20] e.g. in graves belonging to the Zlivki (Швецов 1991, 115) and Rzhevka-Mandrovo types.[21] Regarding the exact terminology, one has to note that Hungarian archaeologists denote the niche dug on the long side of the grave as "*padmaly*," while a similar niche dug on the short end of the grave is designated in other periods (e.g. in the case of Avar graves) as "*fülke*" – niche (Lőrinczy–Straub 2006, 281, 284–285). Considering this distinction, the grave mentioned above at Törökszentmiklós does not belong to the same category as the other graves with niches on their long sides (*Fig. 2. 6*).[22] A similar distinction between the different kinds of niches is practiced in other languages too.[23]

Returning to the formal characteristics of the graves with a sidewall niche, one can see that every variety described by S. Varga (Varga 2013) in the Carpathian Basin (Type 1: horizontal, Type 2: stepped and Type 3: symbolic) have excellent parallels in east Europe. These types of graves of the Saltovo cultural-historical complex are considered by east European researchers as one of the most characteristic features of the Khazars. O. V. Komar has even sketched an evolution stretching from the second half of the 8th to the end of the 9th century,

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14 Nowadays the terminology has been refined and the usual designation is Sokolovskaya Balka type or Sokolovski-horizon (Круглов 2006).

15 Cf. Fodor 1985, 20.

16 These groups are adapted from the typology developed by S. Varga.

17 Törökszentmiklós-Szenttamás, Grave 44. (*Fig. 2. 6*) (Petkes 2011, 3. kép).

18 E.g. Bol'she Tarhany I Graves 126 and 212 (Генинг–Халиков 1964, рис. 4, 6).

19 Graves with a sidewall niche are also found in the classical chamber graves of the Saltovo-Mayatskaya culture, e.g. Mayatskoe gorodishche, Graves 109, 114, 132, 134 excavated in 1982 (Флёров 1993, 39–42).

20 E.g. Mandrovo, Graves 7, 10, 24, 29 (Винников–Сарапулкин 2008, 46), and Rzhevka, Graves 20 and 22 (Сарапулкин 2006, 196).

21 The distinction between the sidewall niche and the niche is appropriate in my opinion because of the functional difference caused by their different size.

22 The Russian terminus for this variety is „ниш-подбой у торцевых стен" (Винников–Сарапулкин 2008, 46).

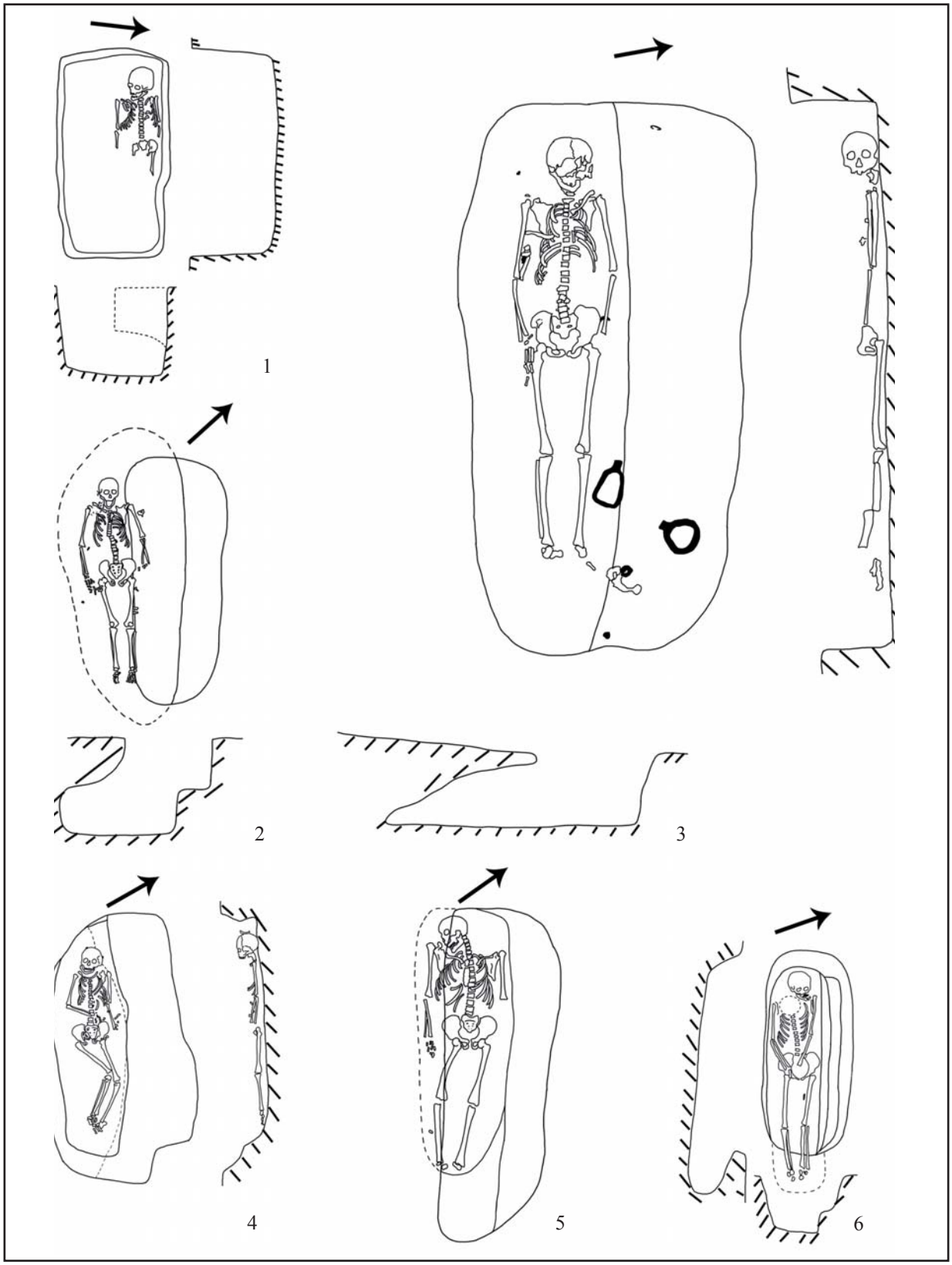

Fig. 2: Graves with a sidewall niche and with a niche dug at the foot-end in the Carpathian Basin of the 10th–11th centuries. 1: Homokmégy-Székes, Grave 142; 2: Cegléd 4/7, Grave 18; 3: Harta-Freifelt, Grave 13; 4: Harta-Freifelt, Grave 15; 5: Kecskemét-Kisfái, Kiscsukás, Grave 139; 6: Törökszentmiklós-Szenttamáspuszta, Grave 44 (after VARGA 2013, 1–3. tábla)

which saw the transformation of the sidewall niches to so-called "*semi-sidewall niches*", after that sidesteps and finally simple grave-pits. He also assumed that this process of transformation reflects the transition of the people from nomadism to sedentism (Комар–Піоро 1999, 152).[24]

Graves with horizontal niches and those combined with a step (*Fig. 3*) [25] – this variant has been detected only recently in Hungary – have exact analogies first of all in the Sokolovskaya Balka-type of the Saltovo cultural-historical complex. The grave types of this find horizont were summarized by A. A. Ivanov in 1999 (Иванов 1999a, 218, таб. 1), whose Group III is represented in Hungary as well.[26] Moreover, the arrangement is also identical, the sidewall niche being on the southern, the step on the northern side of the grave (Круглов 2002, 62). Furthermore, all the formal variants have analogies in the Carpathian Basin of the 10th–11th centuries, such as the *low stepped*,[27] the *square stepped*,[28] the *high stepped*,[29] and the *multi-stepped* variants (*Fig. 3. 1–6*).[30] A further similarity is the presence of horse[31] or horse-harness burials[32] on the steps in both regions.

Regarding the origins of graves with sidewall niche one can conclude, that there is a considerable difference in the distribution of these graves in the Carpathian Basin during the Avar and the Hungarian Conquest Periods, although the earlier ones have always been regarded as prototypes of the later ones.[33] They were most popular in the Late Avar Period in Transdanubia,[34] but it is exactly this region, where they are unknown during the Hungarian Conquest Period. And vice versa: in the southern part of the Great Hungarian Plain, most importantly between the Danube and the Tisza they occur very frequently in the 10th–11th centuries,[35] but are missing in the Late Avar Period (Balogh 2000). In spite of this, their influence cannot be completely excluded, as this was pointed out by S. Varga in his analysis of the cemetery at Csekej (Čakajovce, Sk).

Stepped graves in the carpathian basin of the 10th–11th centuries

Stepped graves are not very numerous in the Carpathian Basin of the 10th–11th centuries (*Fig. 4*). The origin and interpretation of this grave type has attracted even less attention than graves with a sidewall niche (Tettamanti 1975, 90; Bende–Lőrinczy 1997, 225–226). Similarly to the grave type discussed above, the identification of stepped graves is made difficult by the usual soil conditions. In the case of sandy soil, the internal form of the grave is not easy to observe, and the outlines are not clearly discernible either.[36] There are thus many uncertainties involved and it is hardly possible to collect all the graves which belong definitely to this type. Much depends on the methods and care of the

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22 Criticised by Флёрова 2002, 179.

24 Иванов 1999a, 218, Type 3.1; a similar grave in the Carpathian Basin is Dormánd-Hanyipuszta, Grave 2 (Révész 2008, 77–78. Fig. 54).

25 Türk 2010, 100.

26 Иванов 1999a, 218, Type 3.2; a similar grave in the Carpathian Basin is e.g. Bánkeszi (Bánov, Sk), Grave 1 (*Fig. 3. 1*) (Točík 1968, Abb. 3. 1).

27 Иванов 1999a, 218, Type 3.3; a similar grave in the Carpathian Basin is e.g. Bánkeszi (Bánov, Sk), Grave 21 (*Fig. 3. 2*) (Točík 1968, Abb. 4. 5).

28 Иванов 1999a, 218, Type 3.4; a similar grave in the Carpathian Basin is e.g. Bánkeszi (Bánov, Sk), Grave 17 (*Fig. 3. 3*) (Točík 1968, Abb. 3. 6).

29 Иванов 1999a, 218, Type 3.5; a similar grave in the Carpathian Basin is e.g. Bánkeszi (Bánov, Sk), Grave 25 (*Fig. 3. 4*) (Točík 1968, Abb. 5. 2).

30 In the Carpathian Basin e.g. Szolnok, Lenin Tsz. (Ugar) Grave 5 (*Fig. 3. 5*) (Madaras 1996, 3–4. kép).

31 In the Carpathian Basin e.g. Bánkeszi (Bánov, Sk), Grave 20 (*Fig. 3. 6*) (Točík 1968, Abb. 4. 2).

32 There are in addition significant structural differences between the Late Avar and the Hungarian graves with a sidewall niche: in the Avar graves they are deep and clear-cut, while in the 10th–11th century the sidewall niches are generally shallow and are rather symbolic.

33 Cf. the Avar cemeteries around Vörs (Költő 2001). Late Avar graves with a sidewall niche, with rich grave-goods can be firmly dated even to the beginning of the 9th century (Lőrinczy–Straub 2006, 282).

34 E.g. the cemetery at Homokmégy and its sorrounding area, where their number is extremely high: twenty of the hundred graves with sidewall niches were excavated here (Gallina–Varga 2013).

35 For this last cf. Fodor 1985, 20; Bende–Lőrinczy 1997, note 12; Gallina–Hajdrik 1998, note 16.

36 Due to the difficulties outlined above there are many cemeteries, usually excavated in an early phase of research, where the form of the graves were not observed at all. The distribution of certain grave types must therefore be considered very cautiously.

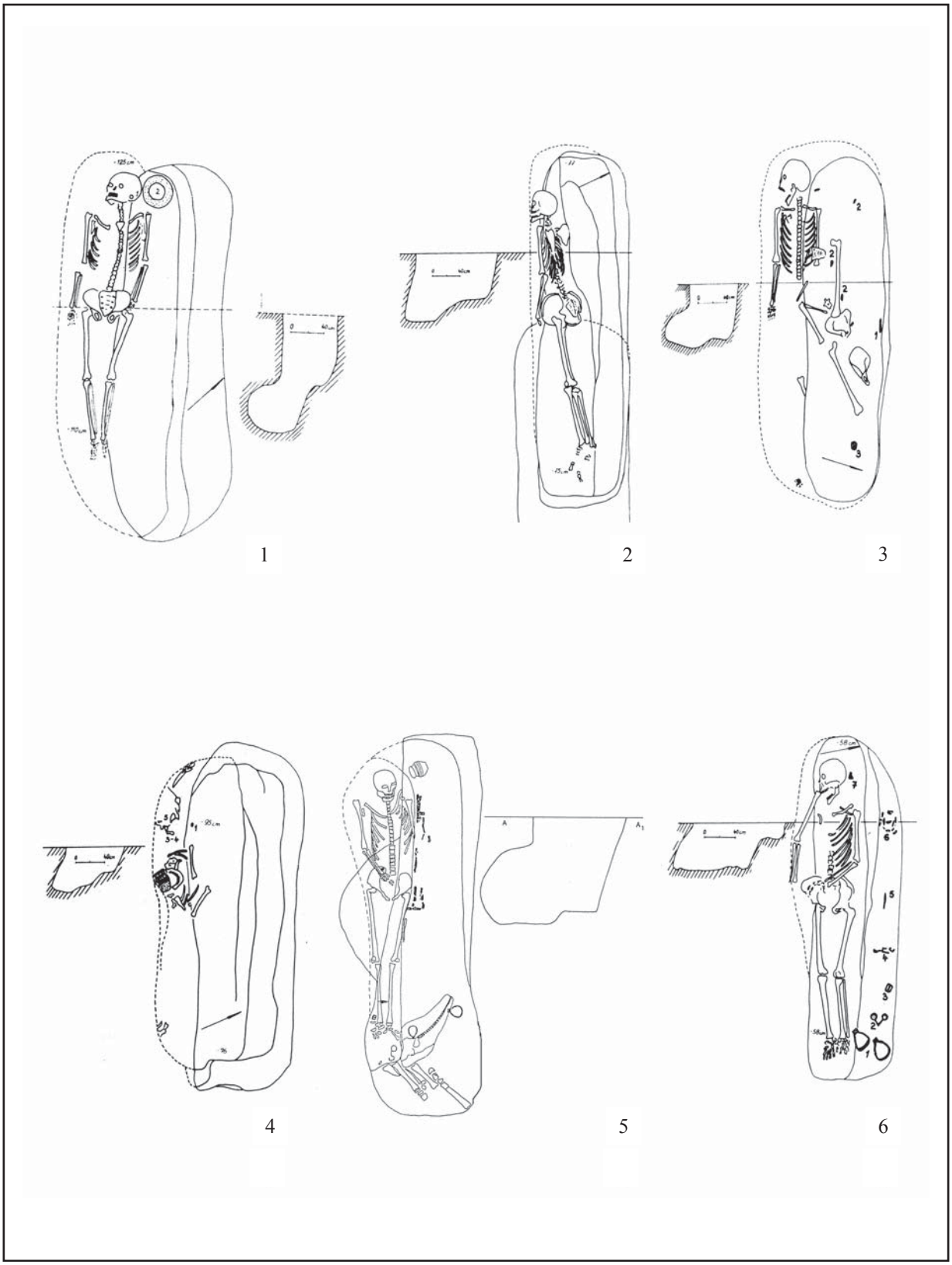

Fig. 3: Graves with horizontal niches and those combined with a step in the Carpathian Basin of the 10th–11th centuries. 1: Bánov, Grave 1; 2. Bánov, Grave 21; 3. Bánov, Grave 17; 4: Bánov, Grave 25 (after TOČÍK 1968 Abb. 59); 5: Szolnok-Lenin Tsz. (Ugar), Grave 5 (after MADARAS 1996, 3−4. kép); 6: Bánov, Grave 20 (after TOČÍK 1968, Abb. 4)

excavator.[37] A further difficulty is caused by the insufficient publications, which do not contain as a rule the cross-section of the graves, and the descriptions do not disclose details about sidesteps either.

Regarding the definition of stepped graves, I have adopted the criterium formulated by G. Lőrinczy, according to which the sidewall of the step is (nearly) vertical (Lőrinczy 1992, Note 9).[38] The steps are usually 10–30 cm high and 5–25 cm broad[39] and according to their position in the grave, stepped graves can be divided in the following groups (*Fig. 4. 1–5*): step on all four sides of the grave (Type 1),[40] step on three sides (Type 2).[41] The most common type has steps only on two sides of the pit (Type 3), usually on the long sides (Type 3.1),[42] but there are also examples having steps on the short sides (Type 3.2).[43] Finally, it is also possible, that there is only one step in the pit (Type 4), usually on the north side (Type 4.1),[44] but steps on the southern side are equally known (Type 4.2).[45] There are steps on the short sides of the grave, on the west end, next to the skull (Type 4.3),[46] and on the east, before the legs as well. (Type 4.4).[47] Some archaeologists excavating stepped graves have already called attention to structures, which resemble steps, but do not exactly conform with the above types (Gallina–Hajdrik 1998, 154), it is perhaps wise to treat them separately (Type 5).[48]

Outside Hungary, steps are generally thought to have supported a timber cover above the dead,[49] but in the graves of the Carpathian Basin there are no clear signs for this practice. Their role or function remains thus uncertain, even if there are some cases, where a horse burial[50] or a horse harness[51] has been placed on them (*Fig. 4. 3*).

New evidence and considerations for the classification of the horse burials of the Carpathian Basin in the 10th–11th centuries

Horse burials in the 10th century Carpathian Basin are without exception only partial horse burials and their number does not reach 10% of the total graves.[52] In general, a similar type of horse burial is prevailing within each single cemetery.[53]

A classification of the 10th century horse burials practiced by the Hungarians[54] was first attempted by Gy. László (László 1943, 46–60),[55] and was then elaborated by Cs. Bálint (Bálint 1969). His work has been published in Russian as well (Балинт 1972). To

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37 This should be stressed, because stepped graves with one step only along their long side result probably only from the inaccurate excavation of a grave with a sidewall niche.

38 At Algyő there were two such graves, both of them without grave-goods (Kürti 1980, 342); Homokmégy-Székes, Graves 48, 155, 165 (cf. Gallina–Hajdrik 1998, 154); Perse (Prša, Sk) Grave 101 (Točík 1968, 39, Abb. 14. 4); Pusztaszentlászló, Grave 175 (Szőke–Vándor 1987, 1987, 48, 74. kép); Sándorfalva-Eperjes, Graves 23, 31, 78 (Fodor 1985, 20); Szegvár-Oromdűlő, Graves 425, 503, 523 (Bende–Lőrinczy 1997, 225); Velence, Graves 3, 6 (Kralovánszky 1965, 3. ábra). Most probably the following ones also belong to the type of stepped graves: Ipolykiskeszi (Malé Kosihy, Sk) I Grave 25 (Hanuliak 1994, Tab. IV. E), Grave 42 (Hanuliak 1994, Tab. VI. E), Grave 43 (Hanuliak 1994, Tab. VII. B), Grave 51 (Hanuliak 1994, Tab. X. A), Grave 74 (Hanuliak 1994, Tab. XV. D), Grave 147 (Hanuliak 1994, Tab. XXXIV. A), Grave 526 (Hanuliak 1994, Tab. XCVI. B), although the walls of the grave are described as oblique (Hanuliak 1994, 13–14).

39 Szegvár-Oromdűlő, Grave 425 (*Fig. 4.1*) (Bende–Lőrinczy 1997, 262).

40 There is none at the eastern end of the grave e.g. at Homokmégy-Székes, Grave 254 (*Fig. 4.4*) (Gallina–Varga 2013).

41 Szentes-Derekegyházi oldal D-3 tábla, Grave 6 (*Fig. 4.5*) (Langó–Türk 2004, 198).

42 Ipolykiskeszi (Malé Kosihy, Sk) I Grave 147 (Hanuliak 1994, Tab. XXXIV A).

43 Orosháza, Pusztai Ignáczné tanyája, Grave 1 (Dienes 1965, 145). It has been considered, that the grave was originally not a stepped one, but with a sidewall niche (cf. Varga 2013).

44 Homokmégy-Székes, Grave 166 (Gallina–Varga 2013).

45 Sándorfalva-Eperjes, Grave 100 (*Fig. 4.2*) (Fodor 1985, 20, 3. kép 3).

46 Bánkeszi (Bánov, Sk) Grave 27 (*Fig. 4.3*) (Točík 1968, 16, Abb. 5. 4).

47 Extremely small and irregular steps cannot, unfortunately, be detected, because there are many cases, where similar features are only due to inadequate excavation techniques.

48 For a summary of stepped graves in East Europe see Türk 2009, 105–110.

49 Öttevény (Uzsoki 1962, 9–26); Szentes, Derekegyházi-oldal D-3 tábla Grave 6 (Langó–Türk 2003; Langó–Türk 2004, 198).

50 Koroncó-Bábota (László 1943, Abb. 2); Kiszombor C, Feature 37 (Langó–Türk 2004a, 206).

51 A similar percentage has been observed among 8th-century finds (Novinki and Uren' horizons) on the Middle Volga (Богачёв–Зубов 2003, 34).

52 On the other hand, e.g. in the cemetery at Tiszavasvári-Aranykerti tábla three major variants were observed (Vörös 2001, 591).

53 For some horse burials, a date in the 11th century has also been considered (e.g. Ópusztaszer, Kiszner-tanya, Grave 1 [Vályi 1994, 396]), but the exact date of these finds is still debated.

54 For earlier research see Nagy 1893; Munkácsi 1931; Móra 1932.

this fundamental study I. Fodor added some remarks regarding the eastern analogies (Fodor 1973, 161–162; Fodor 1977, Note 57), and L. Révész added some adjustments to the principles used for classification (Révész 1996, Note 62). The typology used by Cs. Bálint was based on archaeological criteria, and it was afterwards completed or corrected by the archaeozoologist I. Vörös based on the complete find catalogue of the Upper Tisza region (Vörös 2001). In 2013 I. Vörös published a thorough study discussing the history of relevant research, the classification and other (such as religious) aspects related to this type of burials (Vörös 2013).[56] Most recently P. Langó and A. Türk have published new archaeological evidence from excavations regarding the formal variants of horse burials and they also laid the foundations of a new classification (Langó–Türk 2007, 9–10; Langó et al 2008, 85).[57]

Horse burials in stepped graves

Among the stepped graves discussed above, there are many cases, where remains of a horse or horse harness were placed on the step. A horse burial placed on the step (on the east side of the grave) has already been published from Slovakia.[58] In 2002 a grave, which was unearthed in the vicinity of Szentes, yielded a horse burial, where the animal skin was folded and placed on a step running on the northern side of the grave pit (*Fig. 4. 5*).[59] In the grave at Öttevény, there were equally some horse remains on the step (Uzsoki 1962). Horse harnesses, a kind of symbolic horse burial, are known e.g. from Koroncó-Bábota (László 1943, Fig. 2), and Kiszombor C.[60]

Regarding the eastern analogies of this rite, one can refer to the Middle Volga, where horses were placed on a step in the grave, e.g. in the cemetery at Bol'she Tigani, Graves 12 and 28 (Халикова 1971, 55–56; Chalikova–Chalikov 1981, Pl. 10. 23). Going to the south along the Volga there are partial animal burials among the finds belonging to the heritage of nomads of the Avilov-type (from the end of the 7th to the beginning of the 9th century); 44% of them were placed on steps in grave pits, and 67% were horse burials (Круглов 1990, 47).[61] There are other analogies from the east European steppe that might be interesting in this context. In Grave 7 of Kurgan VI at Oktyabrsk near Donetsk (Ukraine) (Komar 2005) the placement of the horse legs was nearly identical with the arrangement found in Grave 6 at Szentes, Derekegyházi oldal, D-3 tábla (*Fig. 4. 5*). Taken the grave type and the burial rite together, the most exact analogies of the the burials in the Carpathian Basin are found in East Europe, especially in the 10th–14th centuries among Pecheneg-Oguz burials between the Volga and the Don.[62] All the three variants of partial horse burials, as described by A. G. Atavin, have horse remains placed on a step (Атавин 1984, 138). The most common type is found in graves oriented towards the west,[63] but there are also burials oriented towards the east,[64] or the north.[65] In the system defined by A. G. Atavin, the variant II. 5 is most closely resembling the burials of the conquering Hungarians, regarding both the technique of skinning-stumping and the placement of the remains in the grave (Атавин 1984, 137). A. G. Atavin cites further parallels for the stepped horse burial found next to the fortress of Tsimlyansk,[66] e.g. from Kalmykia and the region of Astrahan' (Atavine 2006, 352).

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55 Vörös 2013.

56 Тюрк, А.: *Захоронения с лошадьми у древних венгров (X в.) в Карпатской котловине. Вопросы классификации и их аналогии в салтовской КИО.* In: IV Международная археологическая конференция «Культуры степей Евразии второй половины I тыс. н.э.» Самара 2008.

57 Bánkeszi (Bánov) Grave 27 (*Fig. 4. 3*) (Točík 1968, 15. Abb. 5. 4).

58 Szentes, Derekegyházi-oldal D-3 tábla, Grave 6 (Langó–Türk 2004a, 198). The Grave 1 at Orosháza, Pusztai Ignáczné tanyája is similar to this one (Dienes 1965, 145).

59 Kiszombor C, Feature 37 (Langó–Türk 2004a, 206).

60 The finds of the Avilov horizon was connected by E. V. Kruglov to the proto-Hungarians living on the territory of the Khazars, mostly because there were analogies pointing to the south Ural region (Круглов 1990, 49–50).

61 There is also a written source, mentioning the Oguz custom of partial horse burial (cf. Ковалевский 1956, 128).

62 On the northern step in 27 cases (variants 1, 2, 5, 7, 8), on the southern step in five cases (variants 1, 5, 7, 8) (Атавин 1984, таб. 1).

63 On the left step in 11 cases (variants 5, 7, 8) (Атавин 1984, таб. 1).

64 On the left step in one case (variant 7) (Атавин 1984, таб. 1).

65 E.g. in Grave 41 and 43 at Sarkel fortress the horse remains were observed on 25 cm high steps (Плетнёва 1990, 10 and рис. 9).

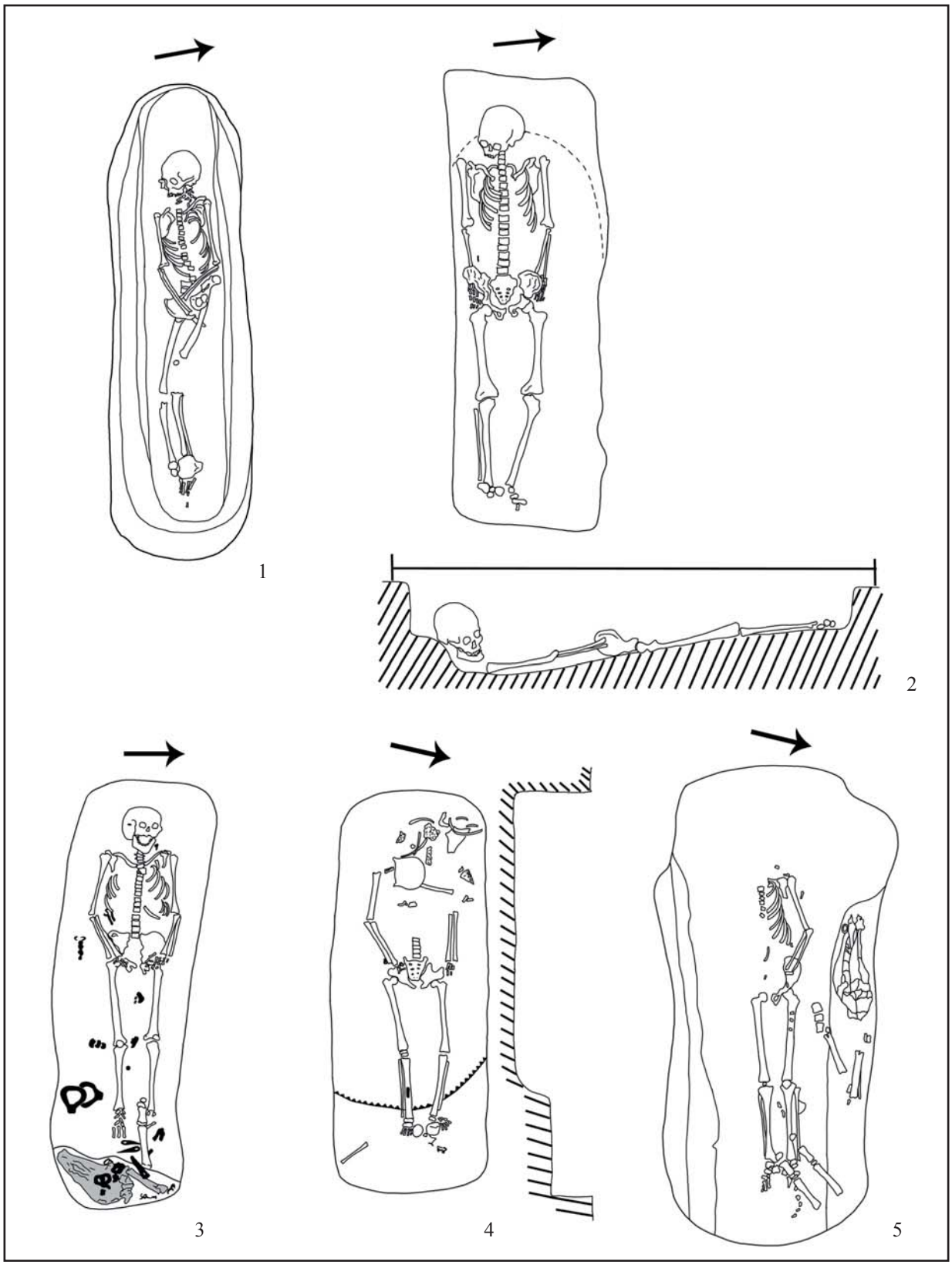

Fig. 4: Stepped graves in the Carpathian basin of the 10th–11th centuries. 1: Szegvár-Oromdűlő, Grave 425 (after Bende–Lőrinczy 1997, 262) 2: Sándorfalva-Eperjes, Grave 100 (after Fodor 1985, 20; 3: Bánov, Grave 27 (after Točík 1968, Abb. 5) 4: Szolnok-Lenin Tsz. (Ugar), Grave 10 (after Madaras 1996, 7. kép) 5: Szentes-Derekegyházi oldal D-3 tábla, Grave 6 (after Langó–Réti–Türk 2011, Fig. 3)

On the orientation of horse skulls in the burials

In most of the horse burials hitherto known from the 10th–11th centuries in Carpathian Basin, the remains of the horses were placed towards the feet of the deceased, sometimes parallel to the skeleton. The horse skull may be in front of, above to the left or to the right of the feet, but it is always oriented to the west, i.e. the horse's head was looking towards the human head (*Fig. 5. 1*). There are, however, some exceptions to this rule. In Grave 595 at Kiskundorozsma-Hosszúhát (Szeged III. homokbánya) the animal skull was turned to the north, i.e. at a right angle to the axis of the grave (Bende et al. 2013) (*Fig. 5. 2*). In Grave 27 at Bánov (Sk) the horse's skull was equally placed at a right angle to the axis of the grave, but it was turned to the south (Točík 1968, 15, Fig. 5. 4) and in Grave 112 at Sárrétudvari–Hízóföld it was the same (*Fig. 5. 4*). There are a few other instances, where a similar placement of horses' skulls (at a right angle to the human skeleton) could be observed, but an eastward orientation occurs only twice (*Fig. 5. 3*).[67]

The orientation of the horses' skulls in the graves of the Conquest Period has not attracted much scholarly attention so far, although it might prove to be historically relevant. Today, it is not only the early Bulgarian cemeteries from the Middle Volga, where there are partial horse burials occasionally placed at the feet of the deceased, but similar graves are known from the Saltovo-Mayatskaya culture and from other regions of the Saltovo cultural-historical complex. E. P. Kazakov has previously assumed that the western orientation of the horses' skulls in partial horse burials placed at the feet in the early medieval cemeteries of the Volga-Kama region is of "*Ugric*" origin. The palcement at a right angle, on the the other hand, was considered by him as a speciality of the Bulgarian-Turkic people moving from the Don to the Middle Volga region (Казаков 1984, 105).

An increasing number of partial horse burials have been published recently from the simple pit graves of the Rzhevka-Mandrovo type from the territory of the Saltovo-Mayatskaya culture. The placement of the animal bones to the feet of the deceased is also quite common, the skull being oriented most often to the north, less frequently to the south. In discussing the Rzhevka cemetery, V. A. Sarapulkin expressed doubts about the strict ethnic division on the basis of the orientation of the horses' skulls as proposed by E. P. Kazakov, because the cemetery contained graves with horses' skulls oriented in virtually every possible direction. He did not exclude, however, the possibility, that the appearance of horse burials (with the animal placed at the feet of the deceased) in the 9th century archaeological record of the given region in conjunction with the westward orientation of the horses' skulls could be interpreted as an influence on local burial habits exercised by the Hungarians passing by (Сарапулкин 2006, 203–204).[68] Partial horse burials placed at the feet of the deceased are actually not typical for the Saltovo culture, but much more for the the Volga-Kama region (from the 6th to the 9th centuries) and for the Carpathian Basin during the 10th century. In the meantime some horse burials have been published from Bulgarian territory on the Danube, but the horses' skulls are placed in these graves at a right angle to the human skeleton.[69]

The evidence currently available is not sufficient to draw detailed conclusions from it. The archaeological record of the Carpathian Basin in the 10th century contains some graves, where the horses' skulls are not oriented to the west, but the number of these cases is not significant. An important fact emerges, however, with certainty: partial horse burials placed at the feet of the deceased (and similar varieties of it) were much more common in early medieval Eastern Europe than previously assumed.[70] In order to detect their internal connections, typological differences or similarities between them, we have to await the establishment of their fine classification, revealing nuances like the orientation of the animal skull as well.

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66 Sárrétudvari-Hízóföld, Grave 146 (*Fig. 5. 3*) (Nepper 2002, Fig. 222) and Nyíregyháza-Felsősima, Grave 382 (Jakab 2009, 101).

67 Similarly cf. Аксёнов–Тортика 2001, 203.

68 Kabiyuk, Kurgan 4 (Рашев 2007, 106–107. рис. 10).

69 The best analogies of the 10th century horse burials of the Carpathian Basin among the finds of the Saltovo cultural-historical complex are the following graves: Netailovka, Graves 252 and 255 (Аксёнов–Тортика 2001, 207); Volokovoe ozero, Grave 8 (Татаринов et al. 1986, 218); Dronovka 3 (Limanskoe ozero) Graves 7 and 34 (Татаринов–Федяев 2001, 367, 370); Rzhevka, Graves 20 and 39 (Сарапулкин 2006, рис. 2. 1. and 2. 3).

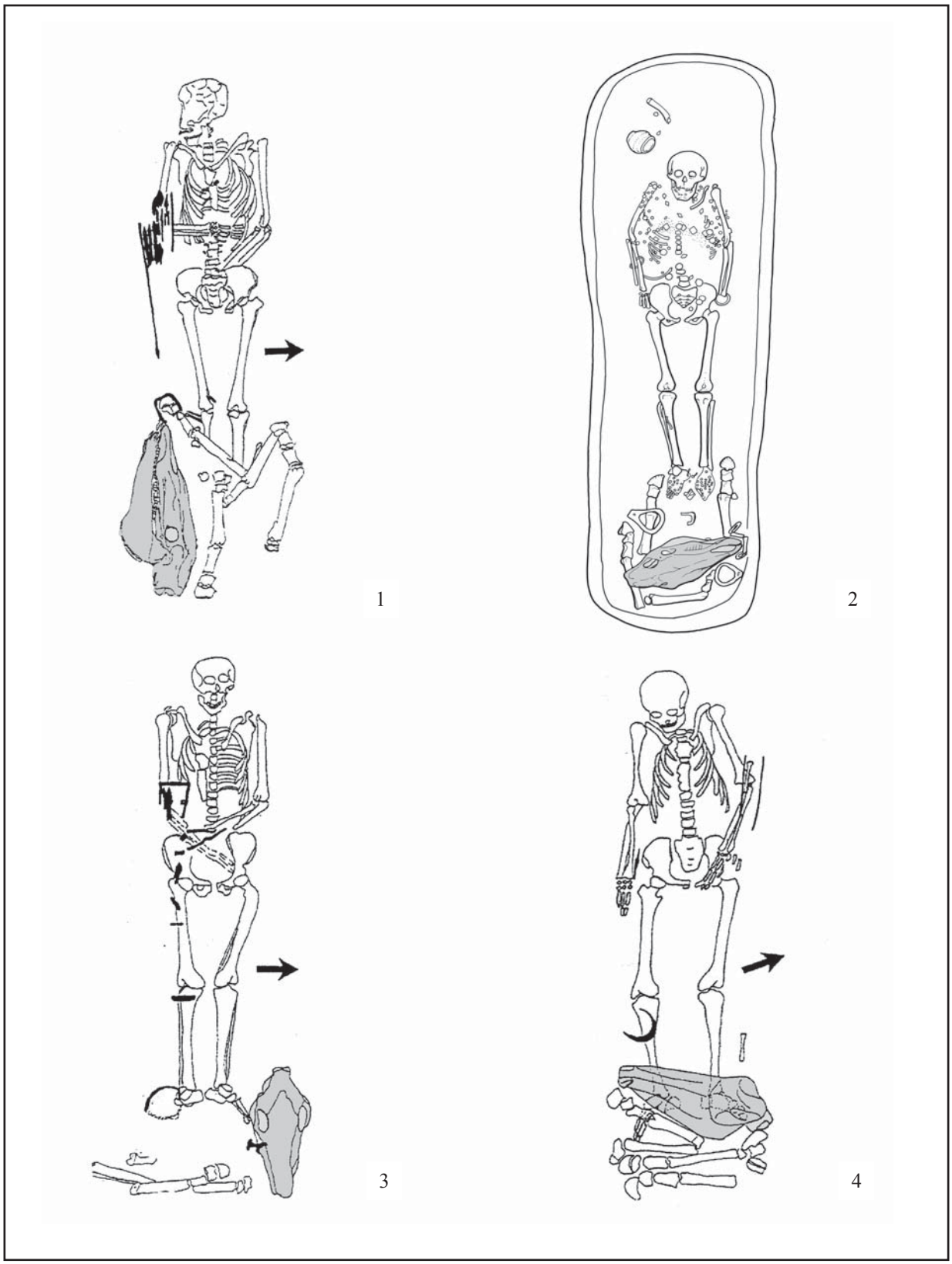

Fig. 5: Orientation of horse skulls in the burials in the Carpathian Basin of the 10th–11th centuries. 1: Sárrétudvari-Hízóföld, Grave 213 (after Nepper 2002, 229. kép) 2. Kiskundorozsma-Hosszúhát, Grave 595 (after Lőrinczy–Türk 2011, 8. kép) 3: Sárrétudvari-Hízóföld, Grave 146 (after Nepper 2002, 222. kép) 4: Sárrétudvari-Hízóföld, Grave 112 (after Nepper 2002, 219. kép)

Summary

The examples and problems discussed above clearly show, in my opinion, that a much greater attention to details is needed in the analysis of 10th–11th century burials in the Carpathian Basin, both during excavation and in the documentation. The genesis of the archaeological record of the Hungarian Conquest Period in the Carpathian Basin can hardly be explored without the observation of these details. I am convinced, that it is only these minor details, which may reveal with a high degree of certainty the connections of this material with the cultures of early medieval Eastern and Central Europe. For this kind of research, the evidence coming from Eastern Europe cannot be neglected; it is equally important as the material from the Carpathian Basin. New kinds of analogies may emerge, on the other hand, from new principles and new approaches in the study of the Hungarian material.[71] Burial habits are generally considered to be very conservative, but caution is needed in the evaluation of similarities, because nowadays there is practically no culture known in Eastern Europe of the early Middle Ages, which would appear to have used a totally homogeneous and uniform set of burial habits. This is particularly true for the Saltovo cultural-historical complex, which has been considered to play a decisive role in Hungarian prehistory. The regional variants of this culture are so different from each other, that it is actually impossible to find two cemeteries, which would be identical in this respect. This has already been pointed out by R. Rashev in his comparative study of Bulgarian pit graves on the Danube and the pit graves of the Saltovo cultural-historical complex (Рашев 2003).[72]

I think the phenomena discussed in this study belong to the eastern roots of the Hungarian tribes conquering the Carpathian Basin. Their exact identification and localisation will require still much effort and further successful and well-documented excavations both in the Carpathian Basin and outside it.[73]

Translated by András Patay-Horváth

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[70] In this respect, I think that the methods, the historical and especially the archaeological approach to the early Middle Ages and the results of research in Bulgaria were excellent in the last decade (cf. *Проблеми на прабългарската история и култура* 4/1–2. София 2007).

[71] Regarding the cemeteries of the 10th–11th centuries in Hungary cf. Fodor 2009, 102.

[72] Thanks are due to Edit Ambrus, Csilla Balogh, Gergely Csiky, István Erdélyi, Eszter Istvánovits, Attila Jakab, László Kovács, Péter Langó, Gábor Lőrinczy, Beáta Pintér and especially to Sándor Varga, who reviewed this paper. In addition, I would also like to thank for the unselfish assistance and help received from all Bulgarian colleagues. This research was supported by the European Union and the State of Hungary, co-financed by the European Social Fund in the framework of TÁMOP 4.2.4. A/1-11-1-2012-0001 'National Excellence Program'.

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BULGARIAN CONNECTIONS OF THE FIND-HORIZON OF THE 10TH CENTURY IN THE CARPATHIAN BASIN: A CASE-STUDY

Péter LANGÓ

The history of the Carpathian Basin and of present-day Bulgaria was intimately connected during Late Antiquity and in the early Middle Ages. This is clearly demonstrated e.g. by the life and work of G. Fehér, who contributed to the research of both territories and who was the first to investigate the connections between them as reflected by the archaeological finds (FEHÉR 1921; FEHÉR 1922; Фехеръ 1927; *Fig. 1*). The research of Fehér called attention already at the beginning of the 20th century to the fact, that the Bulgarian Kingdom in the 9th–10th centuries played a decisive role and Bulgarian metalwork cannot therefore be neglected in the study of the early history and archaeology of the Hungarians (FEHÉR 1940). Fehér has reached similar conclusions while comparing early Bulgarian and Avar finds. In the present paper, I would like to offer a tribute to this outstanding scholar and try at the same time to add some new details and to highlight the actuality of this field of research. The importance of joint research, which has a long tradition in this field, will hopefully equally become clear.

Fig. 1: Géza Fehér (1890–1955)

The comparative studies of G. Fehér have been obscured for a time after World War II as a result of the political changes in Eastern Europe, which also affected scholarly communities and attitudes (FODOR 1990). His work proved, however, to be more permanent than the short-sighted political or nationalistic ideas that tried to confine historical and archaeological research to the territories of modern states, which was dominant in East Europe during the decades of the mid-20th century. A further difficulty was, that scholarship in the 20th century was dominated by an exclusively historical approach and the connections revealed by Fehér were only supported by historical arguments, e.g. with the presence of Kubrat's son in the Carpathian Basin or with the expansion of Khan Omurtag.[1] In general, even in the interpretation of monuments or object groups one tended to think in political categories. A fine example if this is the controversy on belt mounts (*Fig. 2*). There are some belt mounts from the Iatrus limes on the Danube dating from the 10th century that have been published quite recently as belonging to the "*Hungarian style*" of belt mounts (GOMOLKA-FUCHS 2002), although similar objects are known in great quantities from other findplaces in Bulgaria as well. Let me just mention the pieces in the collection of the Varna Museum, in the show-cases of the memorial sites at Pliska and Preslav and in the huge and representative Stara Bulgariya Collection (Varna) of early medieval metal finds (Плетньов–Павлова 1995). The number of known pieces from the Carpathian Basin is relatively small, if compared to their counterparts from Bulgaria. It is therefore high time to ask, if the type has anything to do with the Hungarians at all (*Fig. 3*).

A similar approach could equally be observed in the research of the Carpathian Basin. As I. Dienes has already pointed out in his analysis of the belt from Perbete, some belts were of the so-called "*inner fastening strap*" type (DIENES 1959). This type has been frequently called by Hungarian researchers "*Bulgarian*", because Dienes stressed the presence of this type in Southeast Europe, i.e. in the Byzantine Empire and Bulgaria (PÁLÓCZI

[1] The study was prepared as part of the research project *"Byzantium in Central and Eastern Europe"*, No. NK 72636. For the historical interpretation of archaeological finds from a general theoretical perspective BRATHER 2004.

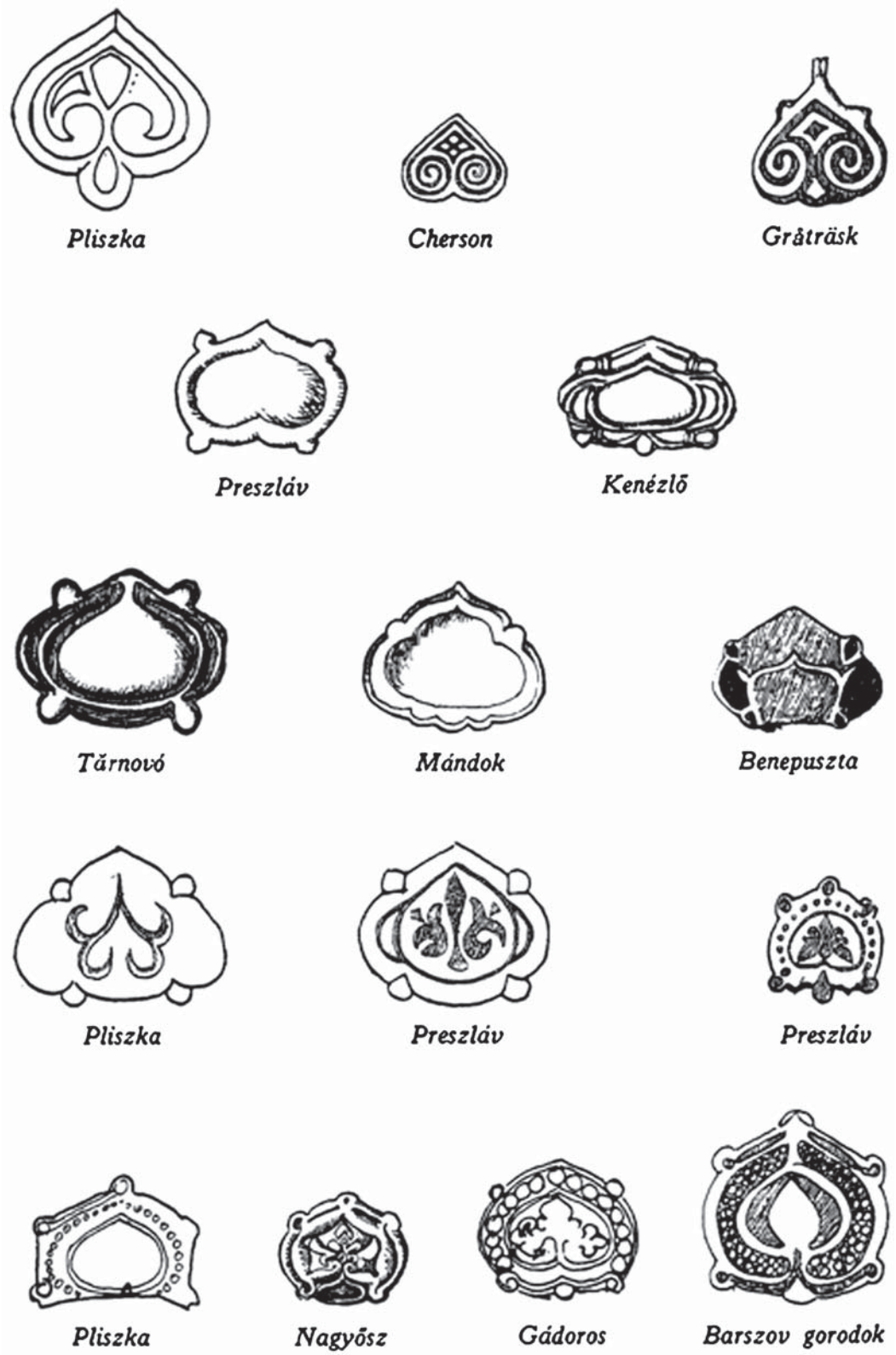

Fig. 2: Similar belt mounts from Géza Fehér's book (after Fehér 1940)

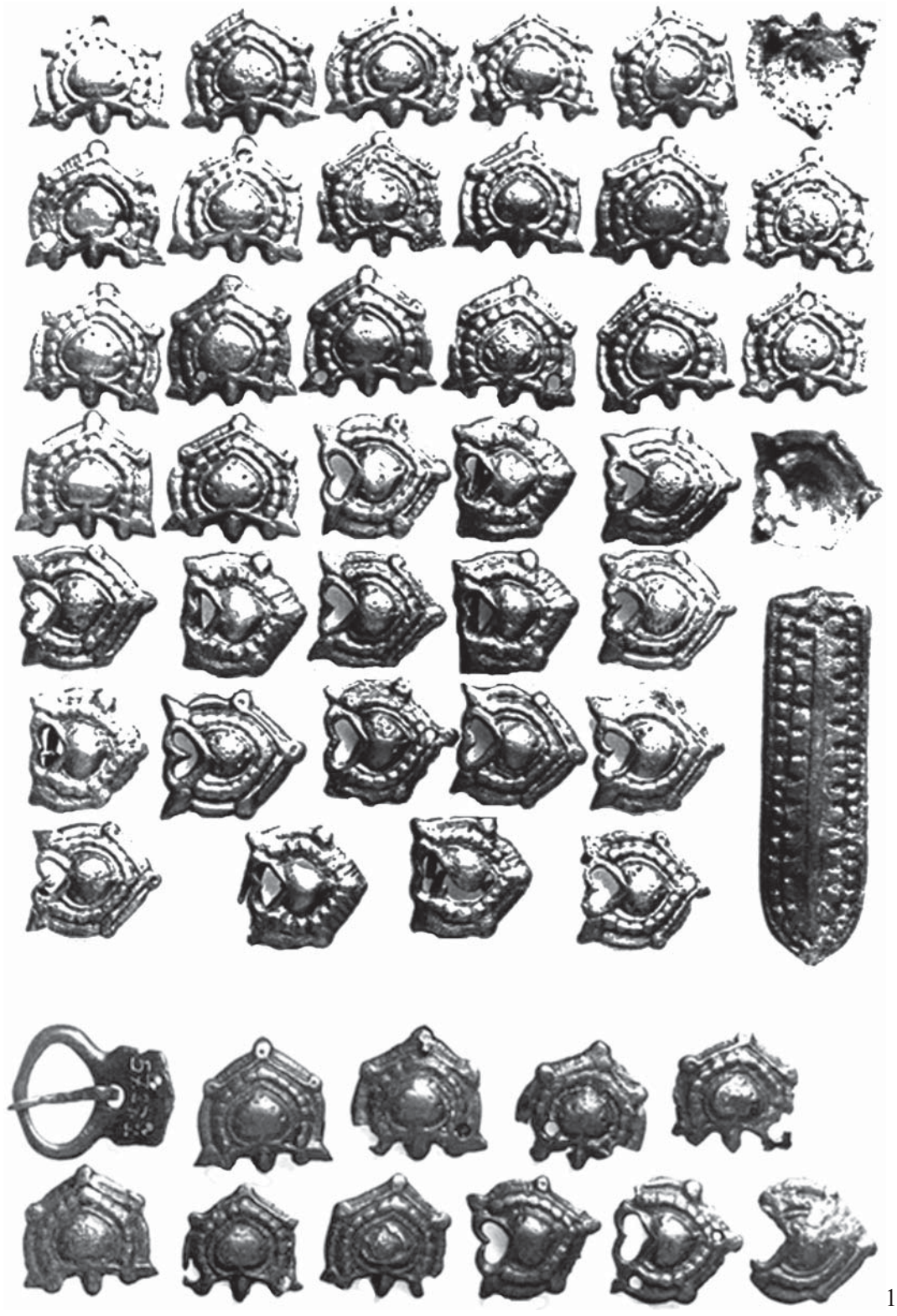

Fig. 3: The similar belt mounts from the Carpathian Basin (after Bálint *1991)*

Horváth 1982; Hatházi 2005). In fact, this is an equally misleading assumption, because the technology applied on these belts was wide-spread in all regions of East and South Europe and without clearing the precise chronology and other problems connected with these finds, it is not safe to attribute it to a certain place or ethnic group.

The most important turning point in the research of the belts was the moment, when the basic question was asked, whether they can be regarded to be of oriental origin at all. This question is actually based on the observation, which was summarized by I. Bóna in the following way: the material culture of the people arriving from the east to the Carpathian Basin underwent serious changes in every case after their arrival (Bóna 1979; Bálint 1994). It is quite obvious, and written sources testify it abundantly, that Avars, Bulgars and Hungarians could retain their customs, traditions for a long time, but at the same time there was another process, observable already in the steppe, that they came into contact with the South European, Mediterranean cultural *koine*. This acculturation process might be called "*cultural conversation*" (Bálint 2004b). During this mutual process, the newcomers added new elements to the late antique Mediterranean cultural heritage, and absorbed at the same time many others from the mixture they found. The belts also reflect some kind of this mutual relationship. Belts were worn of course for a long time both by the nomads of the steppe and by the heirs of the Roman Empire (i.e. the inhabitants of the newly established German states and the Byzantine Empire), and they were equally wide-spread in Iran and in the Muslim world. In general, however, the belt mounts of the early medieval East European nomads were heavily influenced by late antique traditions. This conclusion has been reached by different scholars, such as F. Daim, M. Schmauder and Cs. Bálint independently (Schmauder 2000; Daim 2000; Bálint 2000).

The ornamental decoration of these objects was regarded for a long time to reflect conceptions (myths, legends, religion) typical for a given ethnic group, but this approach is heavily criticized nowadays. It is thus not taken to be granted that these depictions would represent an original and authentic artistic language of the nomads. On the contrary, Hungarian research is by now inclined to accept the idea, originally formulated by the great and influential art historian A. Riegl at the turn of the last century, that the ornamental designs decorating these objects should be regarded as transformations of Mediterranean motifs (Marosi 2002). Winding floral patterns and palmettes are derived from this latter tradition; they have only been adapted by the new users, i.e. the motifs were not simply copied, but adjusted to the circumstances. First of all, the adaptors have carefully selected from the wide variety of motifs available in Byzantine art. This has been clearly demonstrated by B. M. Szőke in his analysis of the "*Avar tendril*" and by F. Daim in connection with Avar bird depictions (Szőke 2001; Daim 2000). It is very likely, that only those elements, objects, depictions and symbols have been selected, which were easily comprehensible for, and compatible with, the conceptions of the newcomers. It is thus likely that the appearance has changed but not the meaning behind the depictions. If this is true, one can only conclude that sophisticated theories reconstructing elaborate narratives on the basis of depictions on certain objects or object groups can be regarded as obsolete. This statement equally applies to the theories relying on the supposed post- Sassanid background of the nomads and to others concentrating on the reconstruction of the hypothetical mythology of a given people.

It was Cs. Bálint, who has demonstrated in detail, that there was an ill-conceived oriental preference underlying the aforementioned "*Sassanid tradition*" (Bálint 2007). The difficulties of this oriental preference, criticized by Bálint, have been pointed out in different studies, concluding in every case that the elements, which were considered to derive from some oriental source, were in fact originating from the Mediterranean world. Recent studies have exploited not only the "*lex parsimoniae*", but other principles as well (Szőke 2001; Bálint 2004). One should emphasize the importance of works clarifying the background of the ornamental vocabulary of the 10th century in the Carpathian Basin. In previous years there was a strange kind of blindness prevalent in this field. The typical ornaments of the 10th century, which were clearly independent from the Mediterranean tradition, were equally missing from the steppe, but have many features in common with ornaments in Bulgaria, as already pointed out by G. Fehér (Fehér 1940). This does not of course mean that this particular type of decoration has been adopted exclusively and immediately from this region. Mediterranean influence was felt not only in Bulgaria, since the Byzantine Empire always had contacts with the steppe region, the most intensive and permanent contact zones being along the lower Danube, on the seabound region of the Caucasus and the Crimea. Written sources attest, that these regions often constituted a boundary zone, where the elements of the two cultures intermingled. Nomadic peoples living in the steppe had encountered the influences of the Mediterranean world long before they permanently settled to the regions along the Danube. Later on, Byzantine influence became even more intensive due to their geopolitical situation. The analysis of the ornamental

Fig. 4: The spread of the 10th century lion-decorated belt buckles

vocabulary carried out on the material from Bulgaria by T. Totev or G. Atanasov clearly reflects this phenomenon (Тотев 2001; Атанасов 1995).

The criticism of the old approach reconstructing coherent narratives from the representations not only reflects a radical change of this particular discipline, but also relies on serious methodological claims, often repeated in modern theoretical literature. Archaeological material on its own is not a sufficient source to reconstruct the entire cultural context of a given civilisation. As an example, I would like to mention the Byzantine belt buckles of the trapezoid type from the 10th century that occur in every region concerned here (Langó–Türk 2004). A well-known piece comes from Pliska, the main political centre of Bulgaria[2] and is decorated with a lion, analysed by many renowned scholars (Аладжов 1981). One of them stressed the symbolic character of the lion, and interpreted it as the symbol of the supreme power of the khan. In the Carpathian Basin, at Kétpó, there is a similar piece, which was recognized as an object revealing Byzantine influence and it was even supposed that its owner would have been Christian (Selmeczi 1980). Taking the interpretation of the piece in Bulgaria as granted, one has argued that the political power of the deceased was similarly great in Hungary. Similar belts and buckles were, however, widespread in the Mediterranean, first of all in its central part, and occur sporadically in marginal zones as well. V. Pletnyov has convincingly shown that their decoration with lions is quite common. After the

[2] *La Bulgarie médiévale. Art et civilisation*. Paris 1980, 92–93, No. 118.

appearance of new finds, they are not exceptional even within Bulgaria, and their number has actually increased rapidly during the last decades (*Fig. 4*).

It is quite impossible to find out, what the owners of these belts actually thought (whether in Pliska or in Kétpó) about this object or whether they had any explicit idea in mind when they decided to wear this particular type of belt. We have absolutely no information about the general assumptions, connotations of contemporary society regarding this type of ornament. We do not know if the lion was really regarded as a symbol and we do not know how the object was acquired by its owner, and if it had any meaning for him at all. There are several possibilities for the interpretation of lion-decorated belt buckles even in a Christian environment. Leaving this environment and extending our horizon to other regions, the number of possible interpretations rises even more. Reliable reconstructions on 10th century Bulgaria or Hungary, where our evidence regarding everyday life and social structures is extremely scanty, are very rare or exposed to great errors.

Another methodological problem is highlighted by the belt buckles of the so-called lyre type. S. Stanilov has shown that this type has a late antique ancestry and can be regarded as a late form of an antique buckle, which became popular and widespread in the 9th and 10th centuries. Regarding the genesis of this type, the possibility has been considered that it originates from the steppe: the pieces carved from bone would have stimulated their imitations in metal (Langó 2005). This theory is built on two principles, which are nowadays generally considered to be obsolete. The first supposes that the material culture of the nomads is basically of eastern origin, and their predecessors should be sought therefore in the east. The other assumption concerns the materials used by the nomads and presumes that nomads did not possess great amounts of metals (first of all precious metals) and could therefore produce their utensils and jewellery mainly from organic materials. This theory can be derived from the evolutionist theory formulated by G. Semper in the 19th century, according to which every community expresses its ideas first in easily procurable organic materials and it is only in an advanced stage of a society, that the same forms appear in more complex materials requiring more sophisticated skills. Recent theoretical and practical studies have discarded both the ill-conceived oriental preference and the so-called Semperianism (Marosi 1996). There are no other considerations proving that the simple buckles from the Altai region, which slightly resemble their Mediterranean counterparts, would be the predecessors or the prototypes of the latter ones, so nowadays it becomes more and more accepted that they are rather imitating them. Anyway, they are chronologically and geographically quite far from the Mediterranean pieces, which on the other hand are continually present in Southeast Europe.

There are many other areas connecting Bulgaria and the Carpathian Basin, e.g. armour, which are quite independent from artwork. In this case, the design of the objects depends mainly on their practicability; the appearance of new types was always stimulated by the desire to achieve greater efficiency. As V. Yotov has shown, there are many similarities in this particular field. Parallel evolution is to be observed both regarding the form of sabres, bows and arrows or in the case of axes. Yotov has convincingly shown that the close similarities in the forms of weapons are due to identical tactics and their parallel appearance is a result of the dynamic integration of new achievements in a wider region (Iotov 2008).

It is an important result of Bulgarian research, that there is a kind of continuity to be observed in the mounts of the 8th–11th centuries. In the Carpathian Basin, the number of mounts decreases radically during the second half of the 9th century or they are very hard to date precisely and the connections between the new finds appearing at the end of the 9th century and their predecessors are relatively few and circumstantial. It is therefore crucially important for Hungarian research that the finds from Bulgaria can throw light on the basic changes of the material during this period. Collections such as those at Pliska, Preslav, Varna (published by V. Pletniov and V. Pavlova) or the Stara Bulgariya Collection (referred to above) clearly reflect the evolution of each object type.

Beside the similarities and parallel features, it is equally important to stress the differences. There are plenty of idiosyncrasies discernible among the finds or burial customs of the two regions, which enable a clear archaeological distinction between them. One of the most important differences is found regarding imported goods. Both V. Grigorov and K. Mesterházy have called attention to this phenomenon in their analysis of the small finds imported from Byzantium. Some of them were fashionable in the territory of the Bulgars, who were the immediate neighbours of the Empire, but have not reached the Carpathian Basin. But it was not only the distance and the intensity of relations, which determined the popularity of a certain object type, but also the characteristics of the adopting culture. The neighbours of Byzantium reacted in a similar way as the Empire itself: they filtered foreign influences, rejected some and accepted others. The relatively small number of glass bracelets in the Carpathian Basin is quite surprising, because they were very popular in Bulgaria and in other regions (*Fig. 5*).

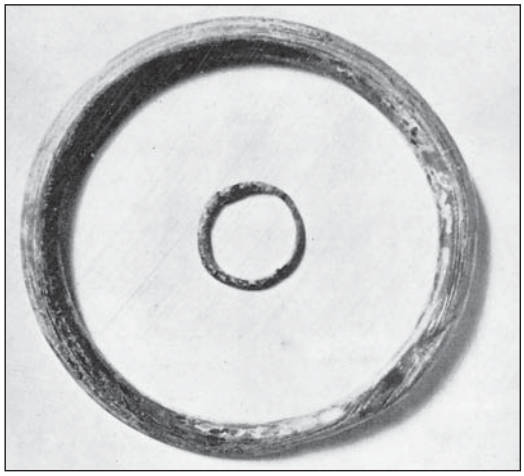

Fig. 5: The 11th century glass braclet from Bene (Bács-Kiskun County) (after Szabó 1938)

Other object types, such as caftan mounts with pendants are absolutely missing or relatively underrepresented in Southeast Europe. Apparently they appeared in Bulgaria only in later periods, which is most thoroughly documented by the finds at Odartsi (Дончева-Петкова et al. 1999; Дончева-Петкова 2005). There are many more examples in both regions for similarities and differences as well, and they document a kind of "*parallel history*", already noticed by G. Fehér. His work is carried on by both Hungarian and Bulgarian scholars, who already added considerable details to his observations. This should be continued by future generations.[3]

Translated by András Patay-Horváth

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[3] This report summarizes the results of a long research carried out with Attila Türk during the last few years. I would like to express my gratitude for the assistance and invaluable help offered by the following scholars in Bulgaria: Ludmilla Doncheva-Petkova, Dochka Vladimirova-Aladzhova, Katya Melamed and Valery Grigorov (Sofia). I am very much indebted to the colleagues of the Sumen department of the Bulgarian Archaeological Institute. It was a great honour to work with them and I have learned a lot from our discussions. I would also like to acknowledge the generous help of the following colleagues: Yanko Dimitrov (NIAM-Shumen Branch), Stela Doncheva (Shumen Museum), Valeri Yotov, Vanya Pavlova † and Boyan Totev (Varna Museum).

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BULGAR, AVAR AND KHAZAR ARISTOCRATIC NAMES IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES (SCYTHO-SARMATIAN AND ALTAIC HERITAGE IN CENTRAL AND EAST EUROPE)

Tsvetelin Stepanov

This article aims at defending the thesis that out of the three main ethnic and political formations in Central and East Europe in the Early Middle Ages – the Avars, the Bulgars and the Khazars – the Bulgars were the most strongly influenced by Iranian traditions. This influence is most clearly discernible in the first names of Bulgar rulers as well as some noblemen in the period until the late 9th century. If we add to this conclusion the fact that there are six fire temples found on the territory of the early medieval Bulgar Khanate (at Pliska, Madara, Preslav and the ancient Durostorum, present-day Silistra), which have an undeniable Iranian origin in the plans (on the temples see Дончева 2005, 73–94; Ваклинов 1977, 111–114; Станилов 1982, 225–234; Овчаров 1983, 56–62; Георгиев 1989, 338–353; Теофилов 1995, 298–306; Бонев 1989, 328–337; Степанов 1999, 156–160; Бояджиев 2008, 310–339; Колева-Кирилов 2008, 610–611. References about the same type of temples in Bulgar-Alan environment, the so-called Saltovo-Mayackaya culture can be found in Биджиев 1984, 115–125; Биджиев 1989, 34–45; Винников–Афанасьев 1991, 118–140. References about the plans of Iranian fire temples in Persia and Middle Asia can be found in Rapen 1994, 128–139, and Sarianidi 1996, 319–329) as well as the self-identification of the Bulgar(ian) by the Iranian personal pronoun for first person singular, *"az"/"azi"* (Степанов 1999, 39), we can make the conclusion that the study of the Bulgars through the prism of Turkic origin only, so typical for the academic studies from the late 19th century onwards until the present, puts in fact lots of limitations in front of scholars and presupposes a narrow-minded interpretation of the facts. Hence, the above mentioned presumption often results in inadequate conclusions. Bringing the Bulgars on the "*Procrustean bed*" of *Turkicness* undoubtedly sets bounds to the horizons of academic investigation and thus impedes adequate and unprejudiced research on the past in general and the various phenomena typical for this region from the 6th until the 9th century, in particular. Frequently, in the period under discussion we can detect specific interferences of autochthonous, Iranian (Indo-European or Scytho-Sarmatian) and Altaic traditions and just because of this reason we should be more cautious during the investigation of the various layers provided by the available sources.

When speaking about the temples, it is worth remembering another fact: in the pre-modern period usually it was the supreme ruler who was the keeper of the sacred fire, and for that reason he was a high priest as well; such keepers of the eternal fire were, for example, the Iranian rulers from the Seleucid dynasty – their title, according to the Iranian tradition, was "*fratadara*", i. e. "*keeper of the fire*" (Roux 2008, 132). It is probably not accidental that in the pre-Christian period the Bulgar fire temples were also situated on the territory of the main residences of the supreme rulers of Bulgaria (at Pliska, Preslav, Madara and Drastar/Dorostol/Silistra).

In addition, we should not forget that *ca*. 90 stone inscriptions, dated to the period preceding the official conversion of the Bulgars to Christianity in the 860s, were found in present-day Bulgaria until 1990s (Бешевлиев 1992). Apart from the large number of such sources there is still no evidence that the Bulgars had used titles typical for the Turkic khanates, such as "*khagan*", "*shad*", "*irkin*", "*chor*", "*tudun*", etc. However, they used "*tarkan*", "*bagatur*" and "*boil*" – titles used also by the Turks and the Alans as well as by other eastern and northern Iranians in the Early Middle Ages.[1]

The problem of the first names of people and *ethnoi* inhabiting this part of Europe during Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages has been studied with a special attention by specialists from Hungary, Germany, Austria, the former Soviet Union and Bulgaria since the population of the formations mentioned above has inhabited territories,

[1] See Степанов 1999, 76–104, and the table on p. 204.

which are within the boundaries of present-day Bulgaria, former Yugoslavia, Russia, Ukraine and Hungary mainly. The approaches were quite similar – looking for etymological explanations for certain first names or ethnonyms.[2] For example, it is usually stated that the name of one of the Avar khagans, "*Bayan*" originates from the Iranian *baga, bhaga* meaning *rich*. This name was used by the Bulgars as well; as it is well known, it was the name of khan Qubrat's eldest son – Bat'Bayan, i.e. "*the eldest/the senior (among Qubrat's sons) brother*" derived from the Iranian "*pati*", which was later transformed into "*bat*" (cf. the very popular form of address to an elder brother until present days in Bulgaria – "*bati*", or its abbreviation "*bat*"). We have scarce information about the first names of other Avar khagans or noblemen, e.g. "*Apsih*" (Menander II.17), or "*Kandih*", which are believed to be related to the Altaic heritage reminding of the names of earlier "*Hun*" chieftains, for example Dengizih; at the same time such first names, i. e. names with '-ih' suffix were not typical of Bulgar royal names.[3] Ermitsis is usually believed to be related to the Bulgar family "*Ermi(ar)*". According to A. Moshev (Мошев 2008, 34), "*Ermi*" is in fact "*Hermes*" and through this name the Bulgars kept "*the Bosporan family tradition*" (See more about the name "*Hermes/Hermas*" in Корпус),[4] excluding those who had been converted to Christianity in the late 8th century and had most often taken names from the Old Testament. However, this problem is beyond the scope of the present article.

Larger amount of information is provided by Khazar first names, which are also a long-standing subject of study. Specialists state that these names have either Turkic or Jewish background and sometimes Iranian roots, secondarily used by the Turkic-speaking Khazar aristocrats (see details in Kevin Brook's website <www.khazaria.com>, the 'Khazarian Names' related part, where the studies of Gy. Moravcsik, D. Dunlop, V. Minorsky, P. Golden (Golden 2003, 15–27), M. Erdal, etc. are enlisted.)[5] The problem with these names is that most of them are preserved by other, non-Khazar, sources and actually present to the scholars foreign phonetics and not the original Khazar one. Despite that it is clear that first names among Khazars such as "*Bulan*", "*Buga*", "*Barsbek/Bardzhik*", "*Kundadzhik/Kundadzh*", "*Yotemish*", "*Tarmah*", "*Kuderkin*" and other similar names have undoubtedly Turkic origin. Some of them, as it has been pointed out long ago, had in fact been titles, which during the years became first names. Even early medieval writers paid attention to the fact that this was quite common in Sassanid Iran.

The first names of the Bulgar rulers and aristocrats are very often found in the written sources of the period under study probably due to the common border between the First Bulgarian kingdom and the Byzantine Empire. Some of them are also present in original Bulgar (or Old Church Slavonic sources dated to the late 9th century) and reveal certain metamorphoses resulting from the introduction of the Slav language in Bulgaria after 893 AD. For example, "*Persian*" who reigned as Khan of Bulgaria from 836 until 852 AD turned into "*Presian*" or even "*Prussian*" in some of the later Byzantine written sources.[6]

Since this short article does not aim at presenting all the details related to the above mentioned aspect, I will try to summarize the available data.

What are the first names of Bulgar aristocrats which can be most probably connected to Turkic heritage and traditions related to names? "*Korsh*" (*(O)Korsis*), "*Tokt*" (*Toktos*), "*Chepa/Dzhepa*" (*Tzepa*), "*Shun*" ((*O)Hsunos*), "*Isbul*" (*Isbulos*) seem to be such names. "*Omurtag*" (*Omurtagos, Mertagon, Murtagos* as provided by various sources in Greek or Latin)[7] and "*Sivin, great zhupan in Bulgaria*" (as stated by the inscription on his silver cup) is also among the nominees, although there is no unanimous opinion among scholars on it.[8]

In recent publications it has been stated that "*Turdats/Turdach*" is also a name of Turkic origin

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[2] B. Simeonov is a very typical example in Bulgaria in this respect. See the essence of his thesis in Б. Симеонов: *Прабългарска ономастика*. Пловдив 2008.

[3] Cf. "*Ermitsis*", Avar chieftain, ca. 626 – see Gy. Moravcsik also see W. Pohl 1988, 18, 28, 38, 186, 223 – Kandich (558/9); 63 f., 101, 118 – Apsich (570–602); 188, 252, 271, 273 – Ermitzis (626).

[4] 1965, Nos. 73, 102, passim – "*Ermes*", "*Ermas*", especially № 399 – "*Ermias*".

[5] Also see Pritsak 1985, 205–211; Rásonyi–Baski 2007.

[6] About the name "*Persian*" see Дуйчев 1960, 479–482. The same text also in Дуйчев 1981, 343–346.

[7] See Moravcsik 1958, 217–218; Симеонов 1984, 540–542; Михайлов 1992, 69–71.

[8] See Корпус 1965, № 897 – "*Savion*". Some specialists accept that "*Sondoke*", the name of one of the noblemen of knyaz Boris-Michael, the prince who converted the Bulgars to Christianity in 865 AD, who visited Rome in the 860s, is also Turkic. There is another hypothesis, recently proposed by T. Krastanov, that "*Sondoke*" was not a first name but a title of the Old Bulgarian writer and diplomat Petar, who was komit and ichirguboil and later (after 879 AD) renounced the ichirguboil title and became chernorizets (i. e. monk). See Кръстанов 2008, 85; also Иванов 1933, 626.

(Попконстантинов 1987, 128; also see Гюзелев 2000, 31 – "Turduzo"). However, some Armenian scholars believe that his name is almost an exact copy of the Armenian "*Trdats*" (Бартикян 1984, 40–45, especially 43–44). Other Bulgar first names such as the royal ones "*Zabergan*", "*Asparukh*", "*Kuber*", "*Tervel*", "*Kardam*", "*Krum*", "*Malamir*", "*Persian*", "*Zvinitsa*", "*Rasate*", as well as several names of aristocrats, e.g. "*Mostich*" (Дуйчев 1998, 247), "*Negavon*", etc., have undeniable parallels or etymologies among the Iranian (Indo-European) circle of *ethnoi*. The Kutrigur Zabergan for example (mid-6th century) (Агафий 1996; Прокопий 1998, 64, 91, 129, 267; Moravcsik 1958, 128) had the same name as the Sassanid commander Zabergan, who also lived during the same century (the 530s–540s) and apparently enjoyed the shahanshah Khosrow I Anushirvan's high confidence. And here comes the logical question, although it did not seem to bother Procopius of Caesarea, was the Sassanid aristocrat Zabergan of Turkic or Iranian origin?

The Bulgar ruler Kardam (777–802) was a namesake of Kardama, the ruler of the Central Asian Saka tribes living in present-day India since ancient times (cf. the Kardamaki dynasty ruling over the territories of the present-day Indian states of Gujarat and Rajasthan). And it is worth reminding that almost all scholars believe that the ancient Saka tribes were of East Iranian origin.

The first name of the Bulgar chieftain, Kuber (late 7th century) is almost identical with the name of the Indian god of wealth, Kubera, i.e. in this case the relation with Indo-Iranian heritage might also be the right direction to follow. The Iranian etymology of the name "*Asparukh*" is also beyond any doubt according to the specialists (Дуйчев 1953, 353–356). The name of the Bulgar ruler Krum reminds of the name of Grumbat, the king of the Chionites living in Middle Asia (Justy 1895; Добрев 1991, 139; Добрев 1994, 78), i.e. Bat' Grum, who lost his son during the siege of Amida in 362 AD as described in detail by Ammianus Marcellinus (XVIII. 6; XIX. 1–2). The name of another Bulgar khan, Telets (Teletzes in Theophanes the Confessor, Telessios in Patriarch Nicephoros) reminds very much of a first name of the ancient Bosporan Kingdom, Telesinos/Teleseinos (Корпус 1965, Nos. 59, 924).

Vladimir (889–893), another Bulgarian ruler, bearing the pagan name of "*Rasate*", was in fact a namesake of the Sassanid commander Ra(h)zates/Rahzad, a statement which is accepted by a number of scholars.[9] "*Royal*" Bulgar names, such as "*Malamir*" (who reigned between 831 and 836) and his successor "*Persian*" (836–852), already mentioned above, undoubtedly also have an Iranian background. Neither "*Tervel*", who was a sovereign of Danubian Bulgaria until 721 AD and helped Justinian II to ascend the throne in Constantinople again in 705 AD, nor "*Zvinitsa*"[10] can be related to any similar first names from the Altaic language family provided by the written sources and the Turkic heritage. In the 1980s, the Bulgarian scholar K. Popkonstantinov (Попконстантинов 1987, 123–135; also see Гюзелев 2000, 31, 232) found exactly the same first name in a Latin text in the form of "*Trebel*", in a document kept in the archive of St. Peter monastery in Salzburg; the document is dated to the 8th–9th centuries and is related to the name of Vergilius, Bishop of Salzburg (710–784).

Apart from the names mentioned above, those of the Bulgar ichirguboila Mostich (who died in the second half of the 10th century) and the nobleman Negavon/Negabon (known from a stone inscription found in present-day Bulgaria and dated to the first half of the 9th century) can also be related, in the first case, to the Bosporan Kingdom's heritage and its strong Scytho-Sarmatian traditions,[11] and in the second case to the name of the Persian aristocrat Negaban. First names such as *Mastous, Mastas, Mostios* are evidenced on stone inscriptions in that same Bosporan Kingdom (Корпус 1965, Nos. 417, 795, 963). A scholar from the former Soviet Union, D. B. Shelov, and some others[12] remind that the first name "*Mastous*" was very popular in the Bosporan Kingdom and that it was of Iranian origin. It is worth remembering the name of "*Mostis*", the king of the Thracian Besi tribe, who most probably was an ally of the Pontic Bosporan king between 111 BC and 105 BC in the struggle of the

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[9] See Honigmann–Maricq 1953, 55, referred by I. Duichev in Дуйчев 1998, 247 and Note 280; also see Дуйчев 1955, 335–336.

[10] Cf. Стойнев 1985, 154 – the three sons of Omurtag bore Slavic names. However, the author does not provide any proof endorsing this statement. See also the thesis proposed by O. Kronsteiner that the names "Asparukh, Krum, Tervel, Omurtag, Presian, Kardam, Malamir, etc." were Slavic ones (sic!?) (Истината 2005, 57).

[11] See the opinion of V. Beshevliev in Иванов 1964, 74, on the Iranian origin of the name of the 10th century Bulgar aristocrat "Mostich"; Бешевлиев 1967, 237–247. On the Bosporan traditions see also Прицак 2006, 16–19; Чурешки 2001, 27; Станев 2005, 25–34.

[12] Шелов 1974, 80–93, especially p. 82; also see the studies of L. Zgusta, V. S. Miller, V. Abaev, J. Harmatta, etc.

latter against the Romans (for further details see in Сапрыкин 1996, 153–154).[13]

Again in relation with the Thracian, basically Indo-European, heritage I would like to call attention to an old hypothesis of H. Gregoire that the name of the Bulgar dynasty "*Dulo*" known from the so-called "*Name List*" of the Bulgar khans, is quite similar to the first name Doulas, found in Greek stone inscriptions from Tanais (the Bosporan Kingdom) (Gregoire 1945, 117, Note 37). M. Vasmer has focused attention on the same Bosporan first name even earlier, pointing out its similarity to the Alanic name Dula (Vasmer 1923, 38), about which J. Marquart believed that it was a tribal Alanic name as well (Marquart 1903, XXXIII, 145, 155, 172). Quite recently this connection has attracted the attention of A. Moshev (Мошев 2008, 19–35, especially 32–34). He claims that there was a "*Thracian-Sarmatian theonim*" Doules/Doulas/Dulus, probably related to "*the celestial-solar cult*" and it probably turned into first and family name in a later period. The hypothesis that behind the name "*Dulo*" in the so-called "*Name List*" one can see Du-lu (together with Nushibi) mentioned by various 7th century written sources[14] is unacceptable since Du-lu was a tribal confederation in the Turk (First) Khaganate, while in the "*Name List*" it is explicitly stated several times that "*Dulo*" was the first royal clan of the Bulgars (Мошев 2008, 25).

Here I would like to sum up:

1) The nature of the Bulgars is heterogeneous as it was pointed out by the famous Bulgarian specialist V. Beshevliev several decades ago (Бешевлиев 1967, 237–247; Бешевлиев 1981, 20–25).[15] It is obvious not only from the identification markers such as the Iranian personal pronoun for first person singular and the presence of at least six temples of fire in Danubian Bulgaria, but also from their various burial rites and practices as well as from the typical artificial cranial deformation having distinct Sarmatian origin;

2) It is crucially important to recognize the fact that such type of states are multiethnic and multilingual; they comprise too many Indo-Iranian traditions to be easily neglected and this is especially true for the Bulgars;[16]

3) In view with more adequate methodology for studying the first names of the state elite of Avars, Bulgars and Khazars, and especially of the so-called royal names of the Bulgars, in a number of cases it seems a better solution to look for complete (or partial) analogies with similar aristocratic first names in the Iranian cultural milieu, instead of seeking hypothetical Turkic etymologies for one or another component of a certain name.[17] Therefore, in my opinion, the Indo-Iranian (Scytho-Sarmatian) and the Indo-European heritage in general of the Bulgars[18] should not be underestimated if we aim at achieving greater success in the unprejudiced study on this issue. It is obvious that the Indo-Iranian/Indo-European background is much more important for the ethnogenesis of the Bulgars than evidenced in the data available for the Khazars or the Avars.

Translated by Tatiana Stefanova

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13 Cf. also the Thracian "*royal*" names Kotis I, II and III, kings of the Odryssian tribes after the 4th century BC and the name – royal again (!) – Remetalk; such "*royal*" names can be found among the Bosporan kings as well (see Гайдукевич 1949, 334; Масленников 1990, 101–118, 161–170, especially p. 105, 107, 112, 116, 164, 166, 169).

14 Different versions of this hypothesis are supported by L. Gumilyov, B. Simeonov, V. Stoyanov, M. Kaymakamova, D. Dimitrov, G. Nikolov, etc. Contra: Мошев 2008, 19–35, who provides various arguments against the identification of Du-lu and Dulo.

15 Also see Рашев 1993, 23–34; Степанов 1999, 174–176; Степанов 2003, 11–91; Степанов 2008, 12–16.

16 See Рашев 1993, 23–34; Рашев 2008, and also studies by P. Dobrev, Ts. Stepanov, G. Vladimirov, etc.

17 Cf. for example Moravcsik 1958, 153–154. The name of the Bulgar khan "*Kardam*" derived from the hypothetic 'türk.-bulg. Qardamïš' (!?), S. 165: the name "*Kuber*" derived from the hypothetic 'bulg.-türk. Küver' (!?), although such Turkic first name is not found in the sources.

18 About the influence of Sarmatian traditions in the cemeteries in Northeastern Bulgaria and Southeastern Romania as well as in other aspects see Ангелова 1995, 5–12; Георгиев 1997, 45–65; Рашев 2000. As early as 1913 D. P. Daskalov has published a small book, "*Българите – потомци на царствените скити и сармати*". София 1913.

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DIE KRISE DES UNGARISCHEN KÖNIGTUMS NACH DEM TOD KÖNIG STEPHANS

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In meiner Studie möchte ich die neueren Forschungen bezüglich der politischen Krise im eben gegründeten Königtum Ungarn nach dem Tod des ersten Herrschers, des heilig gesprochenen Königs Stephan I (1000–1038) zusammenfassen. Ziel meiner Bemühungen ist nicht nur eine skizzenhafte Darstellung der verschiedenen Meinungsbildungen bezüglich einiger Daten, Personen und/oder Ereignisse zu geben, sondern auch eine Antwort auf jene Fragestellung anzubieten, ob sich die politischen Ereignisse dieser turbulenten Jahrzehnte auch in der materiellen Kultur widerspiegeln, besonders ob heidnische Elemente im Fundmaterial nachzuweisen sind. Die Beantwortung dieser Fragestellung kann auch für die bulgarische Forschung gewisse Konklusionen geben, da ach die Gründung des I. Bulgarischen Staates auch mit Perioden der Krise verbunden war. Die Formulierung der gegebenen Fragestellung zeigt ferner meine Einstellung in der Debatte über Zielsetzung bzw. Methodologie der Archäologie, besonders der Archäologie des Mittelalters, ziemlich klar an. Meiner Meinung nach kann man in der Erforschung der materiellen Kultur eines Zeitalters, in dem es schon ziemlich viele schriftliche Quellen gibt, auf die Miteinbeziehung dieser Datenbasis nicht verzichten[1]. Auch wenn die gemeinsame Ausnützung der beiden Quellengruppen mit mehreren Arten von Gefahr einhergeht. Einerseits können die archäologischen Daten ziemlich leicht in eine Form der Illustration degradiert werden, wenn man nur und ausschließlich auf die Deutung der schriftlichen Quellen konzentriert, und andererseits kann der Forscher auch ziemlich leicht die "*Sünde*" einer gemischten Argumentation begehen, wenn man die Deutung der archäologischen Daten nicht in erster Linie auf die inneren Interpretationsmöglichkeiten dieser Quellengruppe, sondern auf wenige, aus ihrem Kontext herausgerissene, schriftliche Angaben basiert. Im weiterem versuche ich der beiden Fehler zu entgehen, ohne aber die Bestrebung nach einer komplexen Darstellung aufzugeben.

Fast alle ungarischen Historiker, die sich mit dem mittelalterlichen Königtum Ungarn befasst hatten, äußerten sich auch über die Krise der mittleren Hälfte des 11. Jahrhunderts. Die meistbenützten, modernen Zusammenfassungen wurden von Gy. Györffy (Györffy 1977, 110–394; Györffy 1984, 835–846), und Gy. Kristó (Kristó 1983, 93–131; Kristó 1994, 291–292) geschrieben. Obwohl diese zwei Historiker sehr oft verschiedene, sogar miteinander diametral entgegengesetze Thesen vertraten, ist ihre Darstellung der Jahrzehnte nach dem Tod Sankt Stephans in sehr vielen Einzelheiten identisch. Der historische Rahmen der analysierten Jahrzehnte ist also ziemlich gut erforscht.

Im Spätsommer des Jahres 1046 brach im Theißgebiet ein Aufstand nicht nur gegen König Peter (1038–1041, 1044–1046)[2], sondern gegen die wichtigste Institution des Königtums, die christliche Kirche aus. Die zwei wichtigsten Merkmale des Heidentums der Aufständischen waren – laut der Ungarischen Chronikkomposition (SRH 337–338) – einerseits dass, das sie ihre Haare kalb rasierten, und zweitens, dass sie wieder Pferdefleisch aßen. Der Heidenaufstand von 1046 war eine eigenartige "*Nebenbewegung*". Er brach aus in einer Situation, als ein beträchtlicher Teil des ungarischen Adels sich in Csanád (Cenad, Rom.), am Sitz des Bischofs Gerhard[3] versammelte, um König Peter aus der Macht zu entfernen (Györffy 1984, 844). Die Anführer des Heidenaufstandes, ein Vornehmer Namens Vata und seine Leute hatten einerseits "*heidnische*", d.h. antichristliche und antikirchliche Forderungen abgefasst, andererseits haben aber die Aufständischen auch die Kontinuität der christlichen Monarchie aufbewahrt. Dadurch nämlich, dass sie die Thronansprüche jener zwei Mitglieder der königlichen Familie akzeptierten, die – fast parallel mit ihrer Bewegung – vom Bischof Gerhard ins Land gerufen wurden. Dieser Kompromiss hatte aber seinen Preis. Die zwei Vornehmen, die noch

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1 Für eine ähnliche Methodik der Analyse argumentierte Fehring 2000, 1–2, 189–194.

2 Eine Überblick des Lebens dieses Königs Szegfű 1994a, 544 mit weiteren, zitierten Fachliteratur; Kristó–Makk 1996, 53–60.

3 Ein Überblick des Lebens Sankt Gerhards bzw. eine Bibliographie der Fachliteratur über diese Persönlichkeit ist zusammengestellt bei Györffy 1977, 563; Karácsonyi–Szegfű 1999, 745–764; Szegfű 1994 231; Silagi 2000, 636–637; Püspöki 2000, 9–76, 143–149.

am Ende der Regierung von Sankt Stephan aus dem Land verjagt worden waren, erlaubten den Aufständischen, Priester zu töten. Als ein Opfer der heidnischen Rache fiel selbst Bischof Gerhard, der die zwei Brüder ins Land gerufen hatte (Szegfű 1979, 19–28). Es soll ausdrücklich hervorgehoben werden, dass die schriftlichen Quellen nur wenige Hinweise auf die sozialen Forderungen der Aufständischen enthalten, und es ist deswegen sicherlich nicht gerechtfertigt, diese Bewegung als einen "*Klassenkampf*" zu interpretieren.[4] Alle Interpretationen dieser Art sind keine Folgerungen einer Quellenanalyse, sondern sind aus der modernen Geschichte von Ostmitteleuropa abzuleiten. Trotz einer starken antichristlichen Einstellung der Aufständischen ist es nicht zu einer heidnischen Restauration gekommen. Es stellte sich nämlich heraus, dass nur einer der königlichen Brüder, der bald verstorbene Vornehme Namens Levente ein Heide war,[5] dementgegen herrschte in den folgenden anderthalb Jahrzehnten der andere Brüder, Andreas (1046–1060) als ein christlicher König, der auch die heidnischen Kulte und Bräuche unterdrückte. Trotzdem ist sein Herrschen in der Ungarischen Chronikkomposition ziemlich negativ dargestellt (SRH 343–345). Es wurde nämlich als ein Gottesurteil dargestellt, dass die zwei Söhne von Andreas namens Dávid und Salamon keine Kinder bekommen konnten. Das Aussterben der engeren Familie von Andreas war demnach die Folge davon, dass er den Mitgliedern des Vata-Aufstandes erlaubte, Priester zu ermorden.

Im Jahre 1061 brach eine zweite Bewegung der "*Heiden*", eine Bewegung die die ältere ungarische Historiographie oft als den zweiten Heidenaufstand nannte (Pauler 1899, 109). Diese Bewegung löste der neue König Béla I. (1060–1063)[6], der Jüngste der drei königlichen Brüder aus. Damit, dass er eine eigenartige Volksversammlung nach Stuhlweissenburg (ung. Székesfehérvár) zusammenrief, wo jedes Dorf zwei Alten und Klugen schicken dürfte. Wenn aber die Repräsentanten der Gemeinen als ihre wichtigste Forderung die Auflösung der christlichen Kirche und die Ermordung der Priester abfassten, zerschlag I. Béla die Versammlung mit seinen Bewaffneten. Die Ungarische Chronikkomposition enthielt Daten über ein eigenartiges Zwischenspiel (Srh 338). König Béla hat nämlich erst eine drei Tagen lange Zeit zum Nachdenken gefordert, und sich in die Burg von Stuhlweissenburg (ung. Székesfehérvár) verschlossen. Da aber die antichristliche und antikirchliche Stimmung der Volksversammlung nicht stiller wurde, entschiedete er sich für die gewaltige Maßnahme. Jene Behauptung der älteren ungarischen Historiographie ist nicht nachweisbar, wonach der Anführer dieser Bewegung der Sohn von Vata namens Janus geworden wäre (Szegfű 1994b, 551).

Wie ist es zu diesen Ereignissen gekommen? Der Schlüssel liegt in den letzten Jahren der Regierung von Sankt Stephan und ich muss deswegen die Schilderung der Geschehnisse im dritten Jahrzehnt des 11. Jahrhunderts beginnen. Das Jahr 1031 ist als ein Wendepunkt zu betrachten. Für Sankt Stephan war das ein tragischer Wendepunkt: in diesem Jahr starb Emerich, sein einzig gebliebener Sohn (Györffy 1977, 374–375; Kristó–Makk 1996, 48). Die ziemlich spärlichen Daten, d. h. nur eine einzige Notiz der Hildesheimer Chronik, weist darauf hin, dass Emerich an einer Jagd ein Todesunfall erlitt. Es gab einen Forscher, der einen "*heidnischen Komplott*" zu rekonstruieren versuchte (Szegfű 1974, 275–285; Szegfű 1982, 1060–1078), die Kritik (Bollók 1979, 97–107; Bollók 1982, 1078–1090). Die detailerte Analyse brachte aber die inneren Widersprüche der Argumentation von László Szegfű hervor. Da Sankt Stephan seinen Sohn ganz bewusst als seinen Nachfolger erzog, ist aus der Frage der königlichen Nachfolgerung die wichtigste Frage der letzten Periode des Herrschens von Sankt Stephan geworden. Die im Weiteren zu analysierende Regierungskrise stellte sich also in ihrem ersten Schritt als ein Problem der dynastischen Nachfolgerung dar. Sankt Stephan hoffte einen Ausweg gefunden zu haben, als er seinen Neffen, den in Venedig geborenen und erwachsenen Peter Orseolo (Györffy 1977, 376–377) zu seinem Nachfolger ernannte. Seine Entscheidung fand am Königshof nur geringe Akzeptanz. Einer der Verwandten des Königs, ein Vornehme Namens Vazul hat wegen dieser Wahl nach 1031 ein Attentat gegen den König organisiert. Da es aber den drei Attentätern nicht gelungen ist, den Plan des Königsmordes auszuführen, wurde Vazul ins Gefängnis geworfen und geblendet. Seine drei Söhne – die schon erwähnten Levente, Andreas und der jüngste Sohn, Béla – sollten aus dem Lande fliehen. Es soll hier bemerkt werden, dass Vazul, wie sein Name (Vasileios-Basilius) vermuten lässt, fast sicher im byzantinischen

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4 Wie das die (vulgar)marxistische Geschichtsschreibung Ungarns tat Molnár 1949, 154; Kristó 1983, 97.

5 Kurze Zusammenfassung seines Lebens Tóth 1994, 408.

6 In der Fachliteratur gibt es Ungewissheiten bezüglich der Frage ob König I. Béla vom 1060 oder 1061 herrschte. Für uns ist den Standpunkt von Gy. Pauler, sowie G. Érszegi und László maßgebend, wonach I. Béla am 6. Dezember 1060 gekrönt wurde Pauler 1899, 108; Benda (Hrsg.) 1983, 88. Diese Chronologie stützt sich auf die Chronik Heinrich Mügeln's Pauler 1899, 430, Anm. 215.

Ritus getauft war, und dass er die christliche Religion wahrscheinlich eher aus politischen Motiven, als einer inneren Überzeugung annahm.

Trotzt des skizzierten Zwischenspieles blieb also Peter Orseolo der Nachfolger, der Stephan am Thron folgen dürfte und sollte. Die negativen Aspekte der Wahl zeigten sich aber bald nach dem Tod Sankt Stephans am 15. August 1038. Obwohl der neue König sich als ein wahrer Nachfolger der Politik von Sankt Stephan legitimieren wollte, konnte er seine Macht nur für eine kurze Zeit stabilisieren. Sein Herrschen, in dem er eine weitere rasche Umwandlung der wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Struktur Ungarns anstrebte, hätte aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach noch zu keinem Widerstand geführt. Der neue König wandte sich aber auch gegen die Macht der früheren Königin Gisela, der Witwe Sankt Stephans, und das soll – nach der Argumentation mehrerer Forscher (Györffy 1984, 838; Szegfű 1994a, 544; Kristó–Makk 1996, 57) – die Maßnahme gewesen sein, die zu einem Komplott am Königshof führte. Alle Einzelheiten sind aus den spärlichen schriftlichen Quellen nicht rekonstruierbar, nur das Ergebnis ist sicher: König Peter sollte 1041, also schon drei Jahre nach seiner Krönung, nach Westen in das Deutsche Reich flehen. Den ungarischen Thron bestieg Samuel Aba,[7] ein Schwager des verstorbenen Sankt Stephans. Dieser Hauptmann, einiger Meinungen nach der Anführer der Kabaren, war kein treuer Anhänger der christlichen Religion, was auch sein doppelter, halb christlicher, halb heidnischer Name zeigt. Auch die spärlichen schriftlichen Quellen weisen darauf hin, dass der dritte König der jungen ungarischen Monarchie die neue Religion ausschließlich wegen politischer Motive akzeptierte, aber auch den Prozess der weiteren Entwicklung des Königtums bremsen wollte. Er setzte nicht nur alle Gesetzte Peters außer Kraft, sondern auch einige von Sankt Stephan gebrachte Anordnungen. Ferner fühlte sich Aba – nach den Worten der Ungarischen Chronikkomposition (SRH 329) – nicht in der Gesellschaft der Vornehmen, sondern der Gemeinen wohl. Mit Samuel Aba bekam also die Krise der dynastischen Nachfolgerung in Ungarn eine neue Dimension. An die Macht ist nämlich 1041 jenes Mitglied der herrschenden Elite gekommen, der das Wesen der Staatsgründung von Sankt Stephan mindestens zum Teil in Frage stellte. Trotzdem enthalten die schriftlichen Quellen keine einzige Bemerkung über die Sympathien dieses Königs gegenüber der heidnischen Religion. König Samuel Aba ließ nicht die Priester, sondern diejenige Adelige töten, die sich als Gegnern seines Herrschens erwiesen.

Das Schicksal des ungarischen Königtums wurde dadurch bestimmt, dass Samuel Aba nur drei Jahre lang herrschen konnte. Der ins Deutsche Reich geflogene Ex-König Peter gab nämlich dem Kaiser Heinrich III ein Eid der Treue, und der Kaiser bemühte sich, die königliche Macht seines neuen Vasallen wiederherzustellen. Sowohl 1042 als auch 1043 und 1044 organisierte Heinrich III Feldzüge nach Ungarn (SRH 331–332). Seine Scharen konnten nur im Jahre 1044 im Inneren von Ungarn einfallen, dadurch dass sie das westungarische Grenzödland von Süden mit Erfolg überholt haben. Für Samuel Aba blieb nur eine Möglichkeit, die eindringenden kaiserlichen Truppen zu stoppen: Heinrich III und König Peter in einer Schlacht niederzuschlagen. Die zwei Scharen stießen sich am 5. Juli 1044 neben Ménfő, also bei einem Ort nahe dem Komitatszentrum und Bischofsitz Raab (ung.: Győr), zusammen (Kristó 1986, 59–60). Samuel Aba hat die Schlacht verloren, nach den Angaben der Chronisten auch deswegen, weil ein Teil seiner Leute an die Seite des Feindes überliefen. Nach der Niederlage versuchte der Verlierer, in sein Heimatsgebiet in die Umgebung des Mátra-Gebirges zu fliehen, er wurde aber ins Gefängnis geworfen und getötet. (Die Ungarische Chronikkomposition enthielt eine, ziemlich schwer interpretierbare Beschreibung über die Umstände seines Todes [SRH 332]) Den ungarischen Thron bestieg wiederum Peter, der inzwischen ein Vasall des Kaisers Heinrich III geworden war. Sein Vasallenstatus wurde auch in der Zeremonie der zweiten Krönung stark hervorgehoben. König Peter konnte trotzt seinen kaiserlichen Herren seine Macht zum zweiten Mal auch nicht stabilisieren. Einerseits war sein Eid selbst wahrscheinlich die Ursache für den Widerstand eines Teiles des ungarischen Adels, andererseits verfeindete sich König Peter auch mit dem Bischof Gerhard, also mit einem der mächtigsten Prälaten Ungarns. Nach einigen Forschern lag die Ursache dieses Gegensatzes in der Tatsache, dass die beiden Persönlichkeiten in Venedig geboren waren, in zwei Familien, die aber miteinander verfeindet waren (Szegfű 2001, 121). Die Konsequenzen dieses Streites sind schon am Anfang der Studie zusammengefasst worden. Hier soll deswegen nur ein einziges Detail hervorgehoben werden. Nach den Angaben der ungarischen Chronikkomposition wurde 1046 der bald verstorbene Levente, der älteste der drei Söhne Vazuls, wie ein Heide begraben (SRH 334). In Ungarn gab

[7] Kurze Zusammenfassung seines Lebens ist zusammengestellt von Szegfű 1994c, 592–593; Kristó–Makk 1996, 61–67.

es also noch Mitte des 11. Jahrhunderts Leute, die wohl vertraut damit waren, wie ein Begräbnis nach dem alten, vorchristlichen Ritus durchgeführt werden soll. Es ist deswegen sicherlich verfehlt, die Heiden des Vata-Aufstandes in solcher Weise darzustellen als ob selbst diese Leute die Riten und Bräuche der vorchristlichen Religion nur in Fragmenten gekannt hätten (Kristó 1983, 97–100). Der Forscher soll auch zwei weitere Daten vor Augen halten. Einerseits ist das die schon Beschriebene Volksversammlung Stuhlweißenburg im Jahre 1061, wo die versammelten Gemeinen als ihre wichtigste Forderung, eine kollektive Apostasia, das heißt die Auflösung der christlichen Kirche und die Ermordung der Priester abgefasst hatten (Srh 338). Ferner musste König Ladislaus I noch Ende des 11. Jahrhunderts in einem Gesetz heidnische Riten und Bräuche, d. h. die Anlegung von Opfern neben Bäume, Quellen und Steine verbieten.[8]

Nach einer kurzen Schilderung der Daten und Ereignisse stellt sich die für einen Archäologen wichtigste Frage: ob sich die Jahrzehnte der Krise im archäologischen Fundmaterial widerspiegeln. Eine leichte Antwort, sozusagen ein Ausweg wird dadurch angeboten, dass die skizzierten Aufstände kurz, d. h. sogar 1046 als auch 1061 nur einigen Monaten bzw. einigen Tagen lang dauerten. Da aber die Vorgänge und Nachwirkungen der skizzierten Ereignisse eine längere Dauer haben, scheint es gerechtfertig zu sein, das Fundmaterial des 11. Jahrhunderts aus diesem Aspekt durchzuschauen.

Ein Überblick des archäologischen Quellenmaterials ist aus forschungsgeschichtlichen Gründen in zwei separaten Teilen durchzuführen. Im Folgenden versuche ich deswegen, die skizzierte Fragestellung in Hinblick auf die Siedlungsforschung, sowie auf die Erschließung der Gräberfelder zu beantworten. Die zwei Forschungsfelder werde ich von einander getrennt, aber auf einander bezogen behandeln.

Die Erschließung der dörflichen Siedlungen ist in Ungarn das jüngste Forschungsfeld in der Archäologie des 11. Jahrhunderts.[9] Bezüglich der Siedlungsarchäologie sind mindestens zwei Fragen formulierbar. Erstens: inwieweit sich die zurzeit von Sankt Stephan geforderte Bekehrung der Gemeinen in ihren Siedlungen widerspiegelt. Zweitens: ob es Unterschiede zwischen den Siedlungen des Kernlandes von Vata, d.h. des späteren Komitats Békés und den anderen Teile des damaligen Ungarns gibt. Bezüglich der Überreste der heidnischen Riten und Bräuche liefert die Archäozoologie einige Ausgangspunkte. Wie oben schon gesagt, betrachteten die ungarischen Chronisten, d. h. jene Geistliche die sich mit der Geschichtsschreibung befassten, das Konsumieren des Pferdefleisches als einen ausdrücklich heidnischen Brauch (SRH 338). Trotzdem enthalten die Grabungen der árpádenzeitlichen dörflichen Siedlungen klare Beweise dafür (Bartosiewitz 1995, Abb. 22), dass der Pferdefleisch in Ungarn gegessen war, und nicht nur im 10–11. sondern auch im 12–13. Jahrhundert (*Abb. 1*). Der Prozess der Christianisierung konnte also diesen Brauch nicht ändern, die ungarische Kirche konnte ihr Verbot nicht geltend machen. Vielleicht auch deswegen, weil der Pferd ein "*Prestige-Tier*" während der ganzen Árpádenzeit blieb[11], und das Reichtum der Einzelnen wurde stets durch die Größe der besitzen Pferdemenge abgemessen. Wegen der Thematik meiner Studie ergibt sich die Fragestellung, ob die Menge der Pferdeknochen in den Siedlungen des Kernlandes des Vata-Aufstandes die Befunde der anderen Landeteilen überragt oder nicht Die zur Zeit verfügbare Daten sprechen eher dafür, dass die prozentuelle Zusammensetzung der Pferdeknochen nach einzelnen Siedlungsgrabungen und nicht nach Regionen variiert. Für eine vorsichtliche Annäherungsweise spricht auch die Chronologie der frühmittelalterlichen Siedlungsarchäologie. Die Möglichkeiten dieses Forschungsfeldes sind bezüglich des Jahrzehntes nach dem Tod von Sankt Stephan leider ziemlich beschränkt, weil die Chronologie der Gefäßscherben, des häufigsten Befundtyps, nur in breiten Grenzen definierbar ist.[12] Die einzelnen Scherben eines Befundes sind nämlich sehr oft nicht mit näheren Zeitgrenzen als die zwei Jahrhunderte zwischen dem Beginn des 10. bzw. dem Ende des 11. Jahrhunderts datierbar.

Eine andere Fragestellung ist aufgrund der Siedlungsarchäologie des Kerngebietes es Vata-Aufstandes formulierbar. Gibt es vielleicht Unterschiede zwischen den frühárpádenzeitlichen Siedlungen des mittleren Theißgebietes, und anderen, in dem Aufstand nicht beteiligten Regionen. Die Frage wird dadurch erleichtert, dass sowohl im mittleren (Kovalovszki 1960, 32–40; Kovalovszki

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8 S. Ladislai Decr. Lib. I. XXII, Györffy 1983, 283.

9 Der Autor dieser Studie hat unlängst die Ergebnisse der ungarischen Siedlungsarchäologie bezüglich des 10–11. Jahrhunderts auch in deutscher Sprache mehrmals zusammengefaßt Takács 1997a, 181–191; Takács 2000, 157–191.

10 Diese Tatache probierte Kristó 1995, 33–38 als ein Nachleben der nomadischen Lebensweise darzustellen. Die Kritik dieser Auffassung Takács 1997, 194–195.

11 Siehe darüber Takács 1996, 150–181.

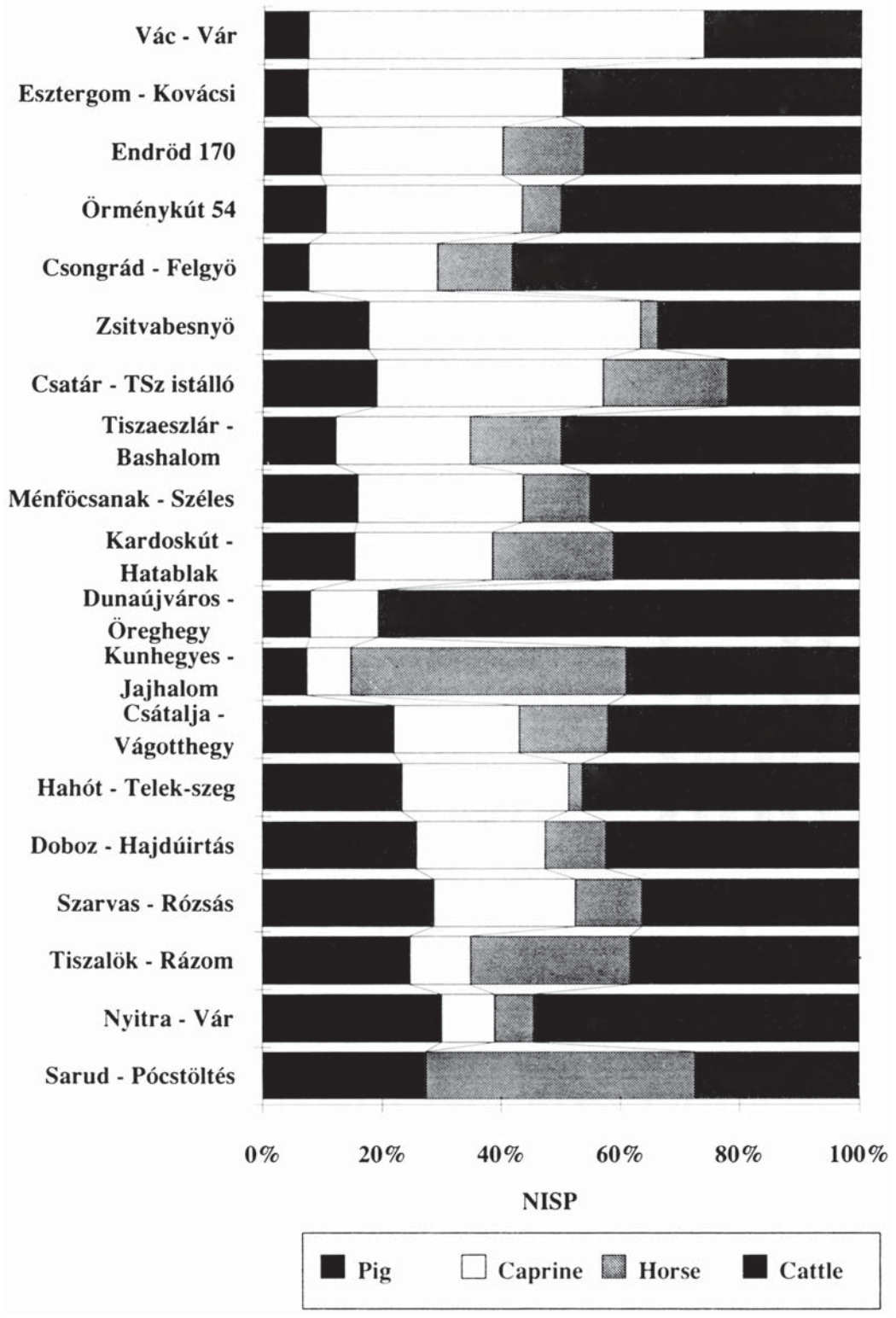

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Abb. 1: Prozentuelle Verteilung der ausgegrabenen mittelalterlichen Tierknochen (nach Bartosiewicz *1995, Abb. 22.)*

1964, 125–143; Kovalovszki 1971, 22–30, 118–120; Kovalovszki 1996, 290; Jankovich 1994, 405–412),[12] als auch im nördlichen (Kovalovszki 1980; Méri 2000) und südlichen (Fodor 1994, 421–438; Boroneanț 1976, 57–69; Zdroba–Barbu 1976; 47–50; Blăjan–Dörner 1978 123–137; Stanojev 1996, 96–95;[13] Trifunović 1990 99–130; Munteanu 1981, 90–99; Munteanu 1983, 234–236). Drittel des Theißgebietes schon ziemlich viele Siedlungsgrabungen durchgeführt wurden. Als eine generelle Konklusion ist das Fehlen auffälliger Unterschiede zu formulieren. In aller drei Regionen weist die lose Siedlungsstruktur nach meiner Meinung wahrscheinlicherweise auf eine seltsame Lebensweise, auf das Vorhandsein des sog. Halbnomadismus (Györffy 1983, 39–59) hin (*Abb. 2*). Wenn man aber die frühárpádenzeitlichen Siedlungsgrabungen der drei Regionen pünktlicher ansieht, findet man, dass alle die mehr als 30 ausgegrabenen Siedlungsteile sich von den anderen in vielen Details unterschieden. Die Unterschiede in der inneren Raumverteilung, oder aber im Hausbau[14] sind aber nach den Fundorten und nicht nach drei genannten Regionen zu verteilen. Demzufolge scheint es auch aufgrund der Siedlungsarchäologie verfehlt, den Ausbruch des Vata-Aufstandes mit einer raschen und zwanghaften Änderung der Lebensweise der Beteiligten zu interpretieren.

Abb. 2: Diagramm der halbnomadischen Lebensweise (nach Györffy 1983, 33, Abb. 2.)

[12] Zussammefassend Béres 1998, 172–180. Nota bene: diese Übersicht bezieht sich auf das mittlere Theißgebiet.

[13] Mit einer Bibliographie der früheren Arbeiten.

[14] Zwei unlängst zusammengestellte Überblicke über den Hausbau der Gemeinen Takács 2001, 7–54; Takács 2002, 280–282.

Nach diesem negativen Ergebnis bezüglich der Siedlungsforschung, wenden wir uns einem anderen Forschungsfeld der Erschließung der Gräberfelder zu. Ich möchte natürlich keine Werthierarchie damit suggerieren, dass den Ergebnissen der archäologischen Ausgrabung der Gräberfelder nur die zweite Stelle in meiner Präsentation zugefallen ist. Diese Suggestion wäre nämlich sicherlich verfehlt. Zweifellos hat eben die archäologische Erschließung der Gräberfelder die wichtigsten Ergebnisse bezüglich der Verhältnisse nach dem Tod von Sankt Stephan geliefert. Das analysierte Forschungsfeld erwirbt seine Wichtigkeit dadurch, dass die Erforschung der Gräberfelder des 10–11. Jahrhundert auch eine mehr als hundert Jahre lange Tradition besitzt, und heute schon über mehr als dreitausend (!) Fundorte verfügt.[15]

Bezüglich der chronologischen Verteilung des Fundmaterials ist eine seltsame Zweispaltigkeit zu notieren. Es gibt nämlich fast kein Gräberfeld mit ärmeren Beigaben, das man mit voller Sicherheit in die erste Hälfte des 10. Jahrhunderts datieren kann, und dementgegen gibt es kein reiches Gräberfeld aus dem mittleren Drittel des 11. Jahrhunderts. Wegen dieser, seitens der elementaren Logik kaum wahrnehmbarer und erklärbarer Diskrepanz ist es wichtig zu betonen, dass es schon im letzten Drittel des 19. Jahrhunderts mit der Untersuchung jener Reihenfriedhöfe begonnen ist, die die ungarische Forschung die Gräberfelder des Gemeinvolkes nennt, die aber in den verschiedenen slawischen Sprachen und im deutschen Sprachgebiet den Namen der Bijelo-Brdo-Kultur trägt.[16] Durch diese Forschungstradition erhält die Untersuchung der Gräberfelder seinen ersten Vorteil: die Zahl der erforschten Grabeinheiten des 10–11. Jahrhundert überragt bei weitem die Zahl der zeitgenossischen Siedlungsobjekte. Den zweiten, vielleicht noch wichtigeren Vorteil sichert das archäologische Fundmaterial selbst. Da es in Ungarn zur Zeit der Staatsgründung der Ritus der Totenobulus verbreitet war, gibt es mehrere Gräber, die Münzen von König Peter oder aber Samuel Aba enthielten. Es ist natürlich eine schwere Frage, inwieweit man diese Münzen exakt datieren kann. Die Forschungen von L. Kovács haben darauf hingewiesen, dass nicht nur die Münzen von König Peter oder Samuel Aba, sondern auch mindestens eine Prägung Sankt Stephans bis zum Beginn der Regierung von König Andreas im Umlauf blieben (Kovács 1997, 94). Wegen dieses langen Umlaufs kann man die Prägungen der Könige Peter und Samuel Aba, und deswegen auch jene Gräber, die als Beigabe die Münzen dieser Herrscher enthalten, mit einer Präzision von wenigen Jahren nicht datieren. Die chronologische Zone, in die diese Gräber gehören, ist also mindestens zwei Jahrzehnte breit. Von einem Standpunkt kann diese Datierungspünktlichkeit als eine sehr ungünstige Bedingung bewertet werden. Man soll aber nicht vergessen, dass im Fall der keramikdatierten Siedlungsobjekte das "*Datierungsstreifen*" eine Breite von mindestens einem Jahrhundert besitzt (Takács 1996, 151–181).

Wegen der Thematik meiner Studie konzentriere ich mich im weiterem nicht auf die Untersuchungen der Chronologie, sondern auf diejenigen Befunde, die auf die Aufnahme der christlichen Religion oder aber auf die weiterlebenden heidnischen Riten und Bräuche hinweisen. Es soll als ein Ausgangspunkt festgestellt werden, dass die Reihengräberfelder des 10–11. Jahrhunderts im Großen und Ganzen ziemlich ärmliche Beigaben "*liefern*", und es ist demzufolge gerechtfertigt, sie als Gräberfelder des Gemeinvolkes zu interpretieren. Wegen der ärmlichen Beigaben wies am ehesten ein ziemlich einfacher Fundtyp: dass Tongefäß (Tettamanti 1975, 104) in diesem Milieu auf das Heidentum der Begrabenen hin. Diese Gefäße dienten nämlich als Behälter für das Totenmahl, ein sicherlich nichtchristliches Element des Bestattungsritus. Da die Mehrheit der Keramikgefäße in Frauen- bzw. Kindergräbern ans Tageslicht kommt, könnte man auch darauf folgern, dass das Totenmahl ein nach Geschlechtern differenzierter Ritus sein könnte. Gegen diese Denkweise spricht aber die Tatsache, dass in Männergräbern oft Tierknochen vorkommen (Tettamanti 1975, 108). Die Befunde sind deswegen eher so zu interpretieren, dass das Totenmahl für verstorbene Frauen und Kinder eine Art der Brei, für Männer aber ein Gericht aus Fleisch war. Als ein scheinbar logischer Forschungsvorgang stellt sich die statistische Auswertung der Überreste des Totenmahls dar. Man muss aber diejenige Tatsache vor Augen halten, dass Tierknochen an den älteren Erschließungen wegen der oft mangelnden Aufdeckungstechnik aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach nur in einem Teil der Grabungen beobachtet waren. Deswegen kann man nur einige neuere Grabungen benützen, mit der Einschränkung, dass nur die großen, auf die Erschließung des ganzen Gräberfeldes ausgerichteten Ausgrabungen für diese Auswertungen geeignet sind.

Wenn also die statistische Auswertung eines des am meisten sichtbaren heidnischen Elementes

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[15] Die wichtigste Fundorte bzw. Funde sind dargestellt in AH, und besonders 478–479 (unnumerierte Kartenbeilage).

[16] Über die Debatte bezüglich des Inhalts dieses Begriffes siehe Bálint 1991, 159–193.

des Bestattungsritus mit Schwierigkeiten verknüpft ist, stellt sich die Frage, ob vielleicht die Ausbreitung des Christentums in den Befunden der Flachgräberfelder des 10–11. Jahrhunderts beweisbar sei. Die Relevanz dieser Fragestellung wird auch dadurch unterstützt, dass J. Gy. Szabó 1980 bzw. 1983 zwei Studien zu dieser Thematik publizierte (Szabó 1979, 74–106; Szabó 1983, 83–97). Nach einer komparativen Analyse von mehreren ungarischen und bulgarischen Gräberfeldern formulierte er seine These über den Einfluss der östlichen Kirche auf die Bestattungsriten der ungarischen Flachgräberfelder des 10–11. Jahrhunderts. Seiner Meinung nach zeigen fast alle Haltungen der Arme, und besonders die sog. orante Haltung, wenn beide Unterarme in der Richtung der Schultern zeigen, auf die Annahme des Christentums durch die Vermittlung der östlichen Kirche. Die einzige Ausnahme seien die Positionen sein, wo beide Arme langgestreckt neben dem Oberkörper liegen, diese Position der Arme sollte auf Heiden hinweisen.

Unlängst versuchte ich in einer anderen Studie, die Gültigkeit dieser These durch Einbeziehung der Daten von mehr als 30 Gräberfeldern des nordbalkanischen Raumes zu überprüfen (Takács 2005, 85–101). Eine detaillierte Darlegung der Analyse wurde auch hier die Rahmen der Studie sprengen. Nur die Ergebnisse sind hier kurz darzustellen (*Abb. 3*). Aus den Tabellen kommt klar hervor das es weder in Bulgarien, noch in Mazedonien eine einheitliche Position der Arme in den frühmittelalterlichen Gräbern zu erwarten ist. Es gibt an allen Gräberfeldern ziemlich viele, unterschiedliche Armpositionen, und ihre Verteilung variiert auch vom Fundort zu Fundort. Fast dieselbe Situation ist auch in Kroatien zu dokumentieren, unabhängig davon, dass die Bulgaren im frühen Mittelalter von Missionären der östlichen, die Kroaten aber von Missionären der westlichen Kirche christianisiert wurden. Als Konklusion ist es festzustellen, dass die an der Brust, am Bauch oder am Becken gefalteten Hände in den verschiedensten Gebieten des Balkans unter Umstände wirklich ein Zeichen des Christentums zu betrachten sind. Zwei Fragen sollen aber offen bleiben: erstens die Frage der konfessionellen Zugehörigkeit des verstorbenen, und zweitens, inwieweit dieses Forschungsergebnis auf das zeitgenössische Ungarn übertragbar ist. Man soll darauf aufpassen, dass die gekreuzte oder gefaltete Position der Hände in Ungarn auch in denjenigen Gräbern des 10. Jahrhunderts zu finden ist, wo die partielle Pferdebestattung bzw. das beigesetzte Pferdegeschirr ein sicherer Beweis des Heidentums ist (*Abb. 4*).[17] Im frühmittelalterlichen Ungarn ist also die Bestattungsposition der Hände nicht auf einen einzigen Faktor zurückführbar, und deswegen ist die Benützung dieses Elements des Bestattungsritus nicht dafür geeignet, dadurch den Prozess der Christianisierung zu analysieren.

Wie oben schon gesagt, nennt die ungarische Forschung seit 1962, seit der Erscheinung der Monographie von B. Szőke (Szőke 1962), die Flachgräberfelder des 10–11. Jahrhunderts als Gräberfelder des Gemeinvolkes, weil die Befunde dieser Gräberfelder im Großen und Ganzen ziemlich "*bescheiden*" sind. Die überwiegende Mehrheit der Schmuckstücke wurde aus Bronze, aus Blei oder aber aus schlechtem Silber verfertigt, Goldstücke sind nur ausnahmsweise zu finden. Desgleichen kommen wertvolle Waffen auch in einem kleinen Teil der Bestattungen vor. Im Laufe der Anwendung des sozialen Aspektes der Auswertung kann man aber eine Frage nicht umgehen. Die Anhänger der These von B. Szőke sollten sich bemühen, darauf zu antworten, wo die Gräber der Vornehmen des 11. Jahrhundert sind. Es wäre eine einfache, sozusagen schlichte Antwort, nur und ausschließlich auf die Kirchenfriedhöfe zu verweisen. Es ist nämlich aus rein logischen Gründen zu bezweifeln, dass die Bewaffneten der Gegner Sankt Stephans, die Leute von Koppány und Ajtony, sowie die Mitglieder des Vata-Aufstandes, sich um die Kirchen begraben ließen. Die oben formulierte Frage ist wahrscheinlich unter Einbeziehung von anderen Argumenten zu beantworten. Mit der Hypothese, dass ein Teil der heidnischen Gräberfelder auch nach dem zweiten Drittel des 10. Jahrhunderts im Gebrauch blieb (Bálint 1991, 177). Die Vertreter einer "*puristischen*" Schule der archäologischen Methodologie, würden diese Argumentation als ein Beispiel der sog. gemischten Argumentation missbilligen, ich möchte aber trotzdem einige Tatsachen präsentieren, um zu zeigen, dass die Befunde selbst eine solche Lösung suggerieren.

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[17] Die weiteren Beispiele sind 1. Eperjes-Takács-tábla, Grab Nr. 4. (Bálint 1991, 52, Taf. XIIIa); 2. Fonyód, Magyar Bálint Általános Iskola, Grab Nr. 1. (Költő 1996, 192, Abb. 2); 3. Karos-Eperjesszög, Gräberfeld Nr. 2, Grab Nr. 63. (Révész 1996, 31, Taf. 106); 4. Karos-Eperjesszög, Gräberfeld Nr. 3, Grab Nr. 6. (Révész 1996, 34, Taf. 115); 5–7. Püspökladány-Eperjesvölgy, Grab Nr. 210, 216, 280 (Nepper 2002, 163. Abb. 99; 165, Abb. 101; 173, Abb. 138); 8–14. Sárrétudvari-Hízóföld, Grab Nr. 84, 126, 148, 160, 171, 183, 213 (Nepper 2002, 310, Abb. 183, 217, 320, Abb. 188, 220, 327, Abb. 222, 329, Abb. 224, 333, Abb. 225, 335, Abb. 226, 432, Abb. 229); 15. Törökbecse-Matejpuszta/Novi Bečej-Matejski brod (Srb) (Nagy 1953, 114, Abb. 15).

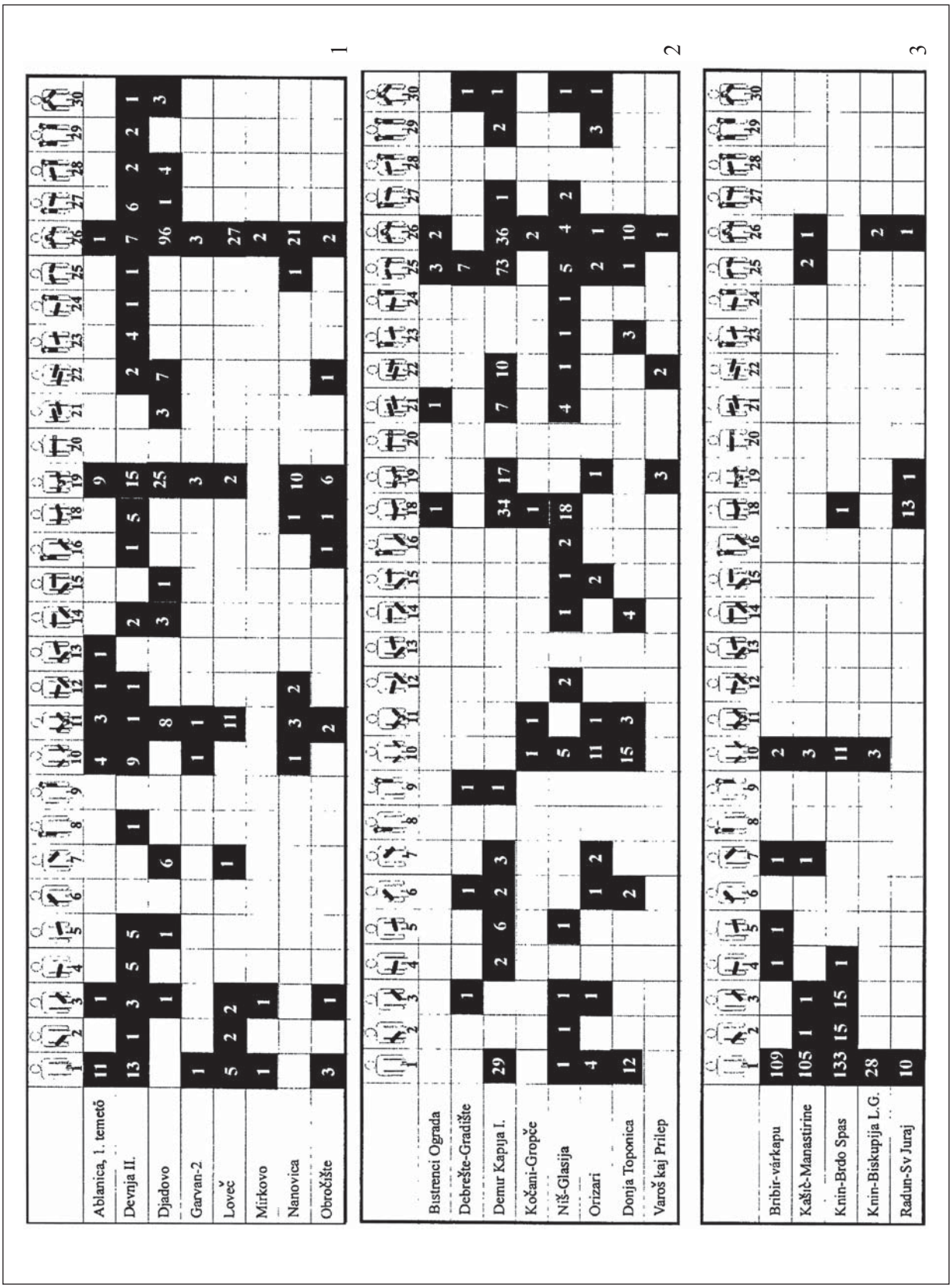

Abb. 3: Die Verteilung der verschiedenen Armhaltungen in den frühmittelalterlichen Gräberfeldern Bulgariens (Tabelle Nr. 1.), Mazedoniens und Südserbiens (Tabelle Nr. 2.) und Kroatiens (Tabelle Nr. 3.) (nach TAKÁCS *2005, 98, Taf. 4.)*

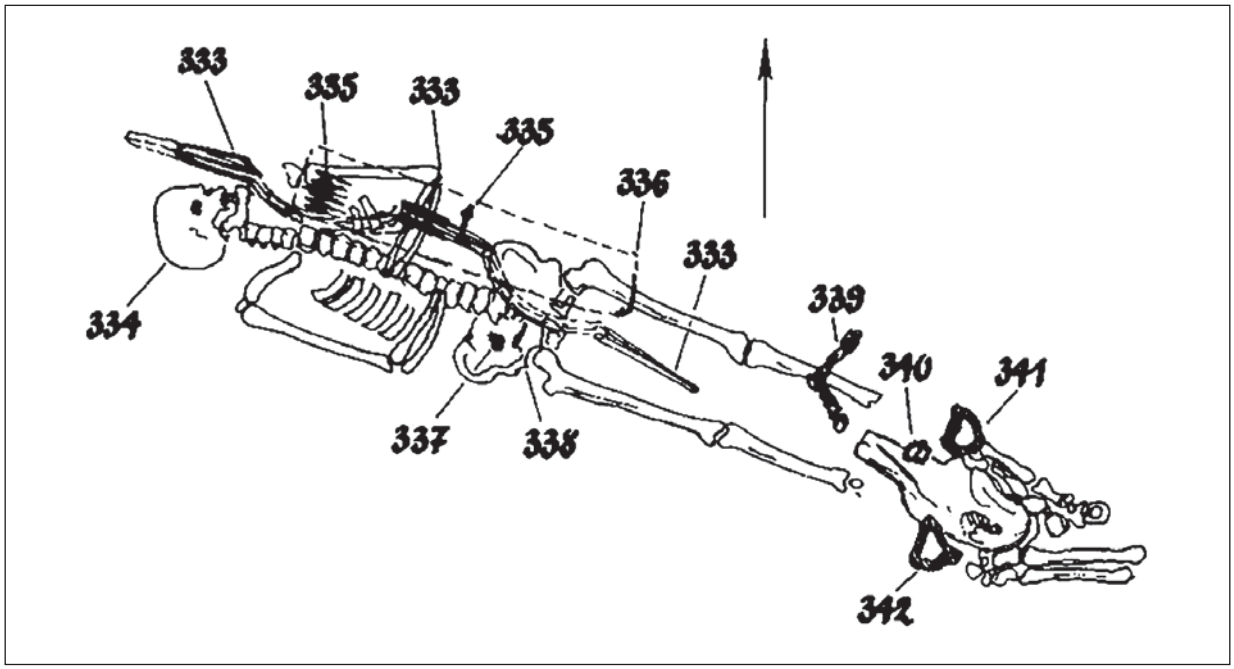

Abb. 4: Altungarisches Grab mit Waffenbeigaben und partieller Pferdebestattung aus Törökbecse, Matej-puszta/ Novi Bečej-Matejski brod (Srb). Der Bestattete wurde mit gekreuzten Unterarmen beerdigt (nach STANOJEV 1989, 64. nicht nummerierte Abb.)

Als Ausgangspunkt muss ich das wichtigste Argument der "*kurzen*" Chronologie präsentieren. Da die reichen altungarischen Gräberfelder oft mit westeuropäischen bzw. byzantinischen Münzen datiert sind, mit Prägungen, die die zeitliche Grenze des zweiten Drittels des 10. Jahrhunderts nicht überschreiten (KOVÁCS 1989), ist es logisch mit einem Abbruch des heidnischen Bestattungsritus zu rechnen. Man soll aber die eigenartige topographische Verteilung der landnahmezeitlichen Gräberfelder nicht vergessen, dass nämlich die Mehrheit der reichen Gräberfelder der landnehmenden Ungarn im oberen Theißgebiet konzentriert ist. Deswegen scheint die historische Interpretation von L. Révész (RÉVÉSZ 1996, 202–206) gerechtfertigt zu sein, wonach sich der fürstliche Sitz in dieser Region befindet. Da es aber aus der schriftlichen Quellen wohlbekannt ist, dass die ungarischen Großfürsten und Könige zur Zeit der Staatsgründung ihren Herrschersitz im mittleren Drittel des Landes, also in dem Dreieck zwischen Gran (Esztergom), Altofen und Stuhlweißenburg hatten (GYÖRFFY 1977, 97–98; KRISTÓ 1980, 467, nicht nummerierte Kartenbeilage), war es auch logisch darauf zu folgern, dass es nach der Beendigung der Raubzüge nach Westeuropa zu einer Verschiebung des fürstlichen Sitzes nach Westen gekommen ist. Diese Verschiebung führte wahrscheinlich auch zur Beendigung der Benützung mindestens eines Teiles der reichen Gräberfelder im oberen Theißgebiet. Deswegen kann man die Verhältnisse des oberen Theißgebietes bezüglich des Verschwindens des heidnischen Bestattungsritus nicht ohne weitere Analysen auf das ganze Karpatenbecken projizieren.

Die Situation konnte in den, für meine Studie besonders wichtigen Regionen, d. h. in dem mittleren und südlichen Theißgebiet wahrscheinlich anders sein, weil hier wegen des Herrschaftsgebietes von Ajtony bzw. wegen des Vata-Aufstandes viele nicht christianisierte Bewaffnete in der ersten Hälfte des 11. Jahrhunderts lebten, oder mindestens leben konnten. Schon F. Móra hat in den 1930er Jahren darauf hingewiesen, dass man in der Umgebung von Szeged mit einem langen Weiterleben der heidnischen Elemente des Bestattungsritus rechnen kann (In einer romansierten Novelle: MÓRA 1982, 399). Die neuere Forschung hat die Glaubwürdigkeit des wichtigsten Argumentes von Móra, die Silbermünze des Königs Ladislaus I in einem Grab mit Pferdegeschirr von Kiszombor-C zuerst bezweifelt (über die Auswertung dieser Münze siehe BÁLINT 1991, 177), und dann völlig widergelegt (LANGÓ–TÜRK 2004, 203–214; LANGÓ–TÜRK 2004a, 223–225), da es die Revisionsgrabung auf eine schlecht beobachtete Superposition hingewiesen hatte. Trotzt aller Unsicherheiten akzeptierte 1968 Cs. Bálint die Möglichkeit des Weiterlebens der heidnischen Bestattungsriten in

Südungarn (BÁLINT 1968, 66), und jüngstens sammelt P. Langó neue Angaben, die diese These unterstützten.[18] Soweit ich weiß, konnte er eine Datenbasis von 6 vertraulichen Befunden zusammenstellen. Da alle diese Daten aus dem mittleren bzw. südlichen Theißgebiet stammen, man kann mit Recht bezüglich dieser Region, also dem Kerngebiet des Vata-Aufstandes mit dem Weiterleben der Pferdebestattung im 11. Jahrhundert rechnen. Seine Materialsammlung möchte ich nur in einem Punkt etwas näher erörtern. Es wurde nämlich in Hodony (Hodoni, R.) in einem Dorf des rumänischen Teiles des Temischwarer Banats ein Gräberfeld aufgedeckt, wo zwei Gräber (Grab Nr. 2 bzw. 4) Münzen von Sankt Stephan zwei andere (Grab Nr. 3 bzw. 17) aber Zamzeuge bzw. partielle Pferdebesttatung enthielten (*Abb. 5*),[19] und – was besonders wichtig zu sein scheint – die zwei münzdatierten Gräber befinden sich in den nahesten Nähe, an den beiden Seiten des Grabes mit Pferdegeschirr Nr. 3. Da die benannten Bestattungen, laut des Berichtes der Freilegern "*vom stratigraphischem und topographischem Standpunkt (...) keine besondere Stelle*" (DRAŞOVEAN et al. 1996, 71) in dem erforschten Teil des Gräberfeldes von Hodony haben, ist es allein wegen der Horizontalstratigraphie mit dem hiesigen Weiterleben der heidnischen Bestattugsriten zu rechnen. Die Forschung sollte also im weiteren in dieser geographischen Umgebung die obere Zeitgrenze der heidnischen Bestattung nicht im dritten Drittel des 10. sondern im mittleren Drittel des 11. Jahrhunderts angeben, natürlich nur im Fall derjenigen "*landnahmezeitlichen*" Gräber, die mit chronologisch nicht sensitiven Fundstücken, so z. B. mit nicht verziertem Pferdegeschirr, oder "*einfacheren*" Waffentypen, so z. B. Pfeilspitzen aufgedeckt wurden.

Der Überblick der archäologischen Funde und Befunde bezüglich der Krise nach dem Tod von Sankt Stephan führte in fast allen seinen Teilen zu negativen Ergebnissen. Das Heidentum der Bevölkerung des Kerngebietes des Vata-Aufstandes ist mit den Mitteln der Siedlungsarchäologie aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach nicht zu fassen. Ferner ergab sich, dass eine präzise Auswertung der Überreste des Totenmahls nur in einem geringen Teil der ausgegrabenen Gräberfelder möglich ist, wegen der mangelhaften Bewahrung der Tierknochen an den älteren Ausgrabungen. Und zum Schluss, hat die Überprüfung der These von J. Gy. Szabó die inneren Widersprüche jener Auffassung nachgewiesen, wonach fast alle Armpositionen der Bestatteten der Flachgräberfelder auf eine Missionstätigkeit der östlichen Kirche hinweisen. Nur zwei der zitierten Forschungshypothesen erwiesen sich als glaubwürdig und für weitere Analysen geeignet. Einerseits brach die Auswertung der Tierknochen solide Beweise dafür, dass der Verbot der Konsumation des Pferdefleisches nicht durchgesetzt werden konnte, anderseits wurde jene Auffassung mit weiteren, leider auch nur impliziten Daten bekräftigt, wonach man mit einem Weiterleben der heidnischen Bestattungsriten bei den Vornehmen in der Region des mittleren und südlichen Theißgebiets mindestens bis der Mitte des 11. Jahrhunderts rechnen dürfte. Von einem Standpunkt führte mein Überblick zu mageren Ergebnissen. Vielleicht war es trotzdem nicht ohne Lehre, uns mit den Resultaten und der Methodologie der zitierten Untersuchungen vertraut zu machen.[20]

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[18] Langó, P.: "*Deo odibilis gens Hungarorum*" oder "*auxulium Domini*"? Die Ungarn und die christliche Welt im 10. Jahrhundert – archäologische Beiträge (im Druck).

[19] Die Auswertung dieses Gräberfeldes wird durch ihren mangelhaften Publikationen erschwert. Wir probierten ein Gräberfeldsplan aus zwei vorhandenen Publikationen (BEJAN–MOGA 1978, 155–168, und besonders 1060. Abb. 1; DRAŞOVEAN et al. 1996, 70–75) zusammenzustellen, unser Versuch aber scheiterte. In der Publikation des neolitischen Siedlungsteils sind die Konturen der Gräber 1–7 und 11 mit Rechtecke markiert, die exakte Stelle der Gräber Nr. 8– 10, sowie 12–18 fehlt aber auch hier. Bezüglich der markierten Grabstellen ist es auch zu bemerken, dass diese zu gerade sind, um die wahre Konturen der Gräber sein zu können, und – was natürlich auch von großer Bedeutung ist – sie wurden an den skizzenhaften Zeichnungen der Skelette der anderen Publikation nicht markiert. So konnten wir die Skelette in die Rechtecke des Gräberfeldsplanes nicht hineinzeichnen, geschweige das es im Fall des Grabes Nr. 3. die Beigaben in einen viel weiteren Kreis liegen, als die Ausdehnung des Grabes die Konturen des Rechteckes markieren. So sollten wir die rechteckigen Konturen sozusagen lehr lassen. Wir haben nur diejenigen Konturen mit grau schattiert, wo die Lage des Skeletts schon in einer skizzenhaften Weise publiziert wurde. Im Fall des Grabes Nr. 5 und des Grabteiles Nr. 11. fehlen auch diese Daten – weswegen auch ihre Grabmarkierungen sozusagen lehr gelassen werden sollten. Die hier nur kurz geschilderten Mangeln und Unsicherheiten führen sozusagen zwanghaft zur Konklusion, dass es dringend nötig wäre den frühmittelalterlichen Teil der Ausgrabung von Hodony (Hodoni, Rum.) neu zu publizieren, samt allen, noch vorhandenen bildlichen Dokumente. Hier möchte ich S. Ősi, dem Graphiker unseres Instituts verdanken, dass er in dem Versuch der Auswertung der bereits publizierten Dokumentation von Hodony seine Fachkenntnisse in voller Breite hineingesetzt hatte.

[20] Die erste Version dieser Arbeit wurde am 6. Juni 2003, in Greifswald, an der Liutitz-Konferenz präsentiert. Leider scheiterte der Versuch, die Studien dieser Konferenz in einem Sammelband zu publizieren.

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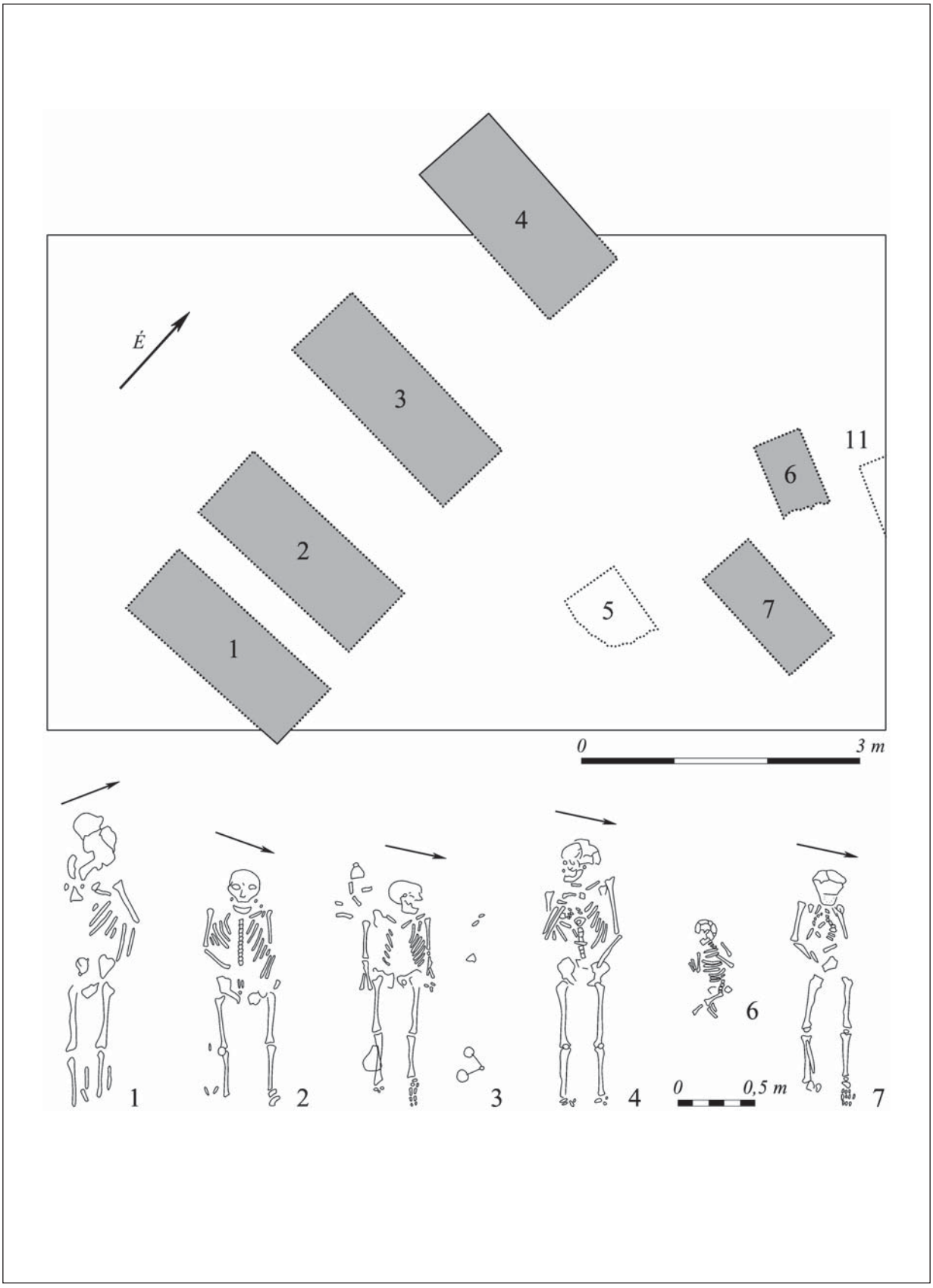

Abb. 5: Skizzenhafter Plan des Gräberfeldes von Hodony (Hodoni, Ro) (nach Bejan–Moga 1978, 160, Abb. 1, mit Ergänzungen)

NEW DATA ON EARRINGS WITH BEADROW PENDANTS: GRAVE 2 OF THE CEMETERY OF KŐSZEG-KŐSZEGFALVI RÉTEK

Ciprián Horváth

In 2009 a rescue excavation was carried out by Zoltán Basticz and István Eke[1] in the area of a planned flood relief reservoir at Lukácsháza, between Szombathely and Kőszeg. The site, located on a slightly terraced hillside, yielded Neolithic, Copper Age, Bronze Age, Roman and medieval features and finds and four 10th–11th-century graves (Ilon–Kreiter 2010). One of the graves contained an earring type so far unknown in the contemporary material of Vas County, and provided important new evidence on the way these had been worn, which I would like to present in this short article.

Description of the grave

Grave 2 (Str 65/Obnr 46): Orientation: NW–SE, depth of grave: 27–32 cm, length of grave: 150 cm, width of grave: 58 cm. Length of skeleton: unknown. Child, 9–12 years old. The grave pit is a rectangular shaft with rounded corners. Its walls are slightly tapering towards its bottom. The northern side is arching, while its bottom slightly slopes towards the southeast. In its northwestern part a 15 cm deep, outwards arching, shallow area can be seen, which, however, could be an excavation error (*Fig. 1*). Only fragmentary skull pieces and some of the teeth are preserved from the skeleton, the rest had been destroyed. The grave had been disturbed, the occipital bone, the teeth, some of the beads, one of the wire rings and one of the earrings had been dislocated from their original position. Grave goods: 1–2. Around the skull, above and below a displaced piece of the occipital bone lay two Type B bronze *earrings with beadrow pendants* (*Figs. 2. 1–2*). One was in a secondary position, slightly higher and oblique, with the piece of the occipital bone below it. The other lay 4 cm deeper, horizontally, so that the pendants of the two earrings crossed each other. The lower part of the rectangular ring is slightly widening and forms a loop; a wire is attached to it, which holds four hollow spheres made up of two halves. The spheres are separated from each other and the upper part of the wire holding the pendant by narrow spiralling metal pieces. The lower part of the wire is bent back. The lower earring was embedded in leather remains. Ring's size: 2.5 × 1.3 cm, pendant's length: 6.3 cm, spheres' diam.: 0.9 cm. 3. Beside the skull lay a flattened sphere shaped, *opaque glass bead* (*Fig. 3. 3*) decorated with green meandering stripes and black-centred eyes. Diam.: 1.5 cm. 4. 23 cylindrical, disc and flattened sphere shaped, blue, green and brown, *translucent* and *opaque glass beads* (*Fig. 3. 12*) lay right of the skull, in a semicircle. Diam.: 0.3–0.4 cm. 5. South of these two flattened sphere shaped, blue, *opaque segment shaped* (*Fig. 3. 8*) beads were found. Diam.: 0.9 cm. 6. 106 cylindrical, whitish green, *opaque glass beads* (*Fig. 3. 13*) were discovered right of the skull, around the cervical vertebrae. Diam.: 0.2–0.3 cm. 7. Four flattened spherical, blue, translucent *segment shaped beads* (*Fig. 3. 9*) were found among the above beads. Diam.: 0.5–0.6 cm. 8. Two yellow, disc-shaped, *opaque beads* (*Fig. 3. 7*) were right of the skull pieces. Diam.: 0.7 cm. 9. Also beside the skull lay a flattened sphere shaped *opaque glass bead* (*Fig. 3. 5*) decorated with white meandering stripes and eyes with red-and-white stripes. Diam.: 1.5 cm. 10. Beside the above bead another flattened sphere shaped *opaque glass bead* (*Fig. 3. 6*) decorated with white meandering stripes and black eyes surrounded by red-and-white stripes. Diam.: 1.5 cm. 11. Among the whitish green cylindrical beads there was a single, white, translucent *segment shaped bead* (*Fig. 3. 4*) covered with yellowish glass coating. Diam.: 0.7 cm. 12. South of the skull lay two cylindrical, black and dark green, and two black, truncated cone shaped *opaque glass beads* (*Fig. 3. 10*). Diam.: 0.3–0,5 cm. 13. Also near the skull, probably above the dislocated earring lay an open-ended *bronze ring* (*Fig. 3. 1*) made of a wire with circular

[1] I would like to express my gratitude to Zoltán Basticz and István Eke (MNM-NÖK) for allowing me to carry out the archaeological analysis of the cemetery.

cross-section. Size: 1.7 × 1.5 cm, thickness: 0.15 cm. 14. Beside the incomplete pendant of the lower *earring* (*Fig. 3. 2*) a white metal wire ring with circular cross-section was discovered also embedded in leather remains. Its end is missing, but its flattened part makes its original form certain. Its other end is cut to form a point. Size: 1.7 × 1.5 cm, thickness: 0.13 cm. 15. Beside the white metal wire ring lay two flattened sphere shaped, white, *opaque* and one *segment shaped* (*Fig. 3. 11*), blue, translucent glass beads embedded in leather remains. Diam.: 0.3–0.5 cm. 16. During the in situ excavation of the finds four *pieces of leather* (*Fig. 3. 14*) were found. The largest partly enveloped three of the spheres of the lower earring. Size: 3.6 × 1 cm.

The analysis of the earrings

Earrings with beadrow pendants found in the grave are a characteristic jewellery type of the conquering Hungarians and probably belonged to the eastern heritage of early Hungarian material culture. However, while the eastern territories are characterized by cast exemplars, in the Carpathian Basin specimens made of wire and decorated with spheres made of sheet metal are more typical. This object type was studied most thoroughly by L. Révész (Révész 1988). The earrings found here belong to variant with four spheres, where the spheres made of two halves are separated from each other by small metal spirals wound around the wire holding the pendant. A piece preventing the turning over of the ring is missing – or cannot be found any more – and a loop on the lower part served to hold the pendant. The analogies of the earring type are known from a number of contemporary burials.[2]

Unfortunately, the upper – originally the left – earring was removed from its original position and lay above a fragment of the also dislocated occipital bone.[3] The lower earring was found in its original position, although only the lower part of its ring was preserved, with a wire ring to the left. During the in situ excavation three further beads, all embedded in leather, were found as well. The rings of the two pieces of jewellery lay at different depths, with their pendants crossing each other (*Fig. 2. 2*).

It is an important fact that the lower earring was enveloped by leather remains, which indicates the presence of a headgear or headdress. This raises the question whether the objects – most importantly, the earrings – had been connected to this part of the costume.

Unfortunately, soil characteristics in the Carpathian Basin rarely allow the preservation of buried organic material, thus the reconstruction of costume is mostly based on the position of certain objects within the graves. In the grave of Kőszegfalva, a few smaller pieces of leather had been preserved – the largest piece bearing the impression of three spheres of the earring – although not in a way that would immediately justify connecting them with the metal objects. The remains were conserved by J. B. Perjés and É. Skrach.[4] On the edge of one of the pieces three artificial perforations can be seen, another seemed as if it had been tied with a metallic thread(?). The discovered pieces show the greatest similarity with pig skin, although the possibility has been raised that they may have been made of the skin of a non-local animal species. The presence of artificial holes confutes the opinion that the pieces might have been made of human skin. The cut of the headgear/headdress cannot be reconstructed, and due to the nature of the remains the reconstruction of this piece of costume has to be based on the location of the objects, specifically the right earring and the objects in its vicinity.

The term "*earring*" of course carries already a definition of the way the object had been worn; nevertheless, it is clear that not all "*earrings*" had been worn in the ear: it should suffice to recall some graves – found in the Carpathian Basin as well – that contained 4–8 exemplars.[5] In the case

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2 Győr-Téglavető-dűlő, Grave 47; Piliny-Sirmányhegy, Grave 64; Szentes-Derekegyházi oldal, Grave 1; Karos-Eperjesszög II. cemetery, Grave 47; Hajdúsámson-Majorsági földek; Tiszanána-Cseh-tanya, Grave 25 (Révész 2008, 299, Note 299), Čakajovce/Csekej (Sl), Grave 276 (Rejholcová 1995, 30, Tab. XLIX).

3 It has to be noted that green patina could be seen on the skull fragment from the earring. During the in situ excavation of the pair of earrings, wooden remains were also discovered beside the leather pieces.

4 See B. Perjés J.: *Kőszeg, Kőszegfalvi-rétek 1. (KÖH azonosító: 68997). Az SNR 65 sírból előkerült bőrmaradvány vizsgálati eredményei*. Budapest 2010. (Manuscript); Skrach É.: *Rövid beszámoló a Lukácsháza 01 lelőhelyről származó bőr leletről*. Budapest 2009. (Manuscript).

5 For a reconstruction of earrings with a similarly large number of jewellery among the Western Slavs see Brather 2001, 282, Abb. 76.

of earrings with beadrow pendant, however, we do not know of such cases, and to my knowledge more than two exemplars have not yet been found in a grave; actually, the opposite is true: a number of burials have been documented where – despite proper excavation – only one specimen was found. This remains an unresolved question, I do believe, however, that the low number of specimens within a context cannot in itself be considered evidence for their use exclusively as earrings.

While the number of earrings is usually known and properly documented, their position within the grave – on which the reconstruction of costumes is based – is less so. Many publications only mention the two sides of the skull or its vicinity as the exact findspot of the earrings; the more exact location is rarely given in cases when the earrings lay around the temple or the mastoid process. We know about cases where earrings were placed on one side in a position consistent with their function as earrings, but upside down and in a broken state on the other side. Other positions include: beside the jaw or the cervical vertebrae, at the distal end of the right clavicle, above the end of the humerus; or in a position further away from where they might have been worn, e.g. around the proximal end of the left lower arm bones, on the ribs, above the right lower ribs, or even around the left side of the pelvis. Cases are attested where both earrings lay on the left lower ribs or below the lower jaw.

Regarding the way earrings with beadrow pendants had been worn, A. Börzsönyi reported already in connection with the pair found in Grave 47 at Győr-Téglavető-dűlő (Börzsönyi 1903, 69) that "*the temple of the skull was green on both sides, but the earrings had been destroyed*". Although this report is incorrect regarding the preservation of the earrings themselves, it shows that the patina caused by their corrosion was observable on the skull near the temple. Another important milestone in this research was the excavation of graves with similar jewellery in the cemetery of Bolshie Tigani and the reconstruction of a version of these earrings connected by chains (Chalikova–Chalikov 1981, 19, 29, 62, Abb. 7, 20). These reconstructions had an impact on Hungarian research and approaches as well. Á. S. Perémi gave a similar reconstruction of the costume of Grave 1 at Várpalota-Semmelweis u., where the ring of the earrings hung from the loops on the lower part of a cap decorated with pressed metal rosettes (S. Perémi 1986, 128, 15. ábra). According to K. K. Végh, in the case of Grave 5 from Kistokaj-Homokbánya the earrings connected by a chain – in this case behind the nape – also hung from a cap (K. Végh 1993, 63). I am also of the opinion that the version of the earrings connected with a chain could have been worn hung from a headgear or headdress (Horváth 2004, 464–465). This, however, might be true for other cases as well. During the reconstruction of the way the earrings found in the grave at Kőszeg had been worn it is my working hypothesis that the jewellery had been worn in the same position during life as it was placed in the grave, although – as seen above during the review of the position of the earrings – a number of examples indicate that this was not always the case.

The starting point should be their exact location within the grave, but due to the disturbance of the grave it is of greater importance for us that most of the ring of the in situ excavated earring was missing already at the time of burial, thus it could not have been worn hung from the ear, only sewn on something. The wire ring found beside it could not have been used as a replacement, since it could not have been pulled through the looped ring fragment holding the earring pendant. Such a solution would not be unparalleled, and also indicates – although only after a secondary remodelling – the wearing of "*earrings*" not in the ear. In Grave 1 at Marcelova/Marcellháza (Sl) one of the earrings, whose ring was actually remodelled from an S-terminalled hair-ring, lay near the left temple of the skull, while the other, similarly reworked piece was below the skull (Točík 1968, 33–34, T. XXIII).

The grave in Kőszeg is important from the point of view that here a pair of earrings with beadrow pendant were found together with a hair-ring, an association that so far has been attested during proper excavations very rarely, if at all (Révész 1996, 79), since the known instances are all from old excavations and must be treated with caution. Among the at least 85–90 graves containing earrings with beadrow pendant this was observed only in very few cases, e.g. in Grave 3 at Bihar-Somlyóhegy (Karácsony 1903, 403, 3. ábra) or in Grave 579 at Čakajovce/Csekej (Sl) (Rejholcová 1995, 63–64, T. XCII). The cause of this may have been different hair styles or wearing at least some of the wire rings in the ear. The grave of Kőszeg, however, does not contradict this trend, since these – or at least the in situ exemplar – had not been attached to a braid, but were probably placed in the grave as part of a headgear or headdress made of organic material.

The cut of the leather headgear/headdress remains unknown, but most certainly the pair of earrings had been attached to it, just like the wire ring and maybe some of the beads, perhaps not only the three exemplars found immediately beside the earring. Thus, contemporary costume could have been much more varied and colourful that we may think based on the objects – and their traditionally assumed function.

This find draws our attention to that fact that we have to expect that earrings – and not only earrings connected by a chain – had been worn in different ways. This latter – beside being a tradition – may have had a practical reason as well, to avoid a stronger pull of the ears in case the chain got caught in something. A chain hanging under the chin was probably awkward during everyday work; consequently, it must have been worn only on special occasions (S. Perémi 1986, 130). Thus, it had a purely decorative function, in contrast to the finds from the cemeteries of the Bulgars, where the chains connecting the earrings also held the hair braids in position, thus they were functional as well (Stojanova-Serafimova 1979, 797).[6]

Translated by Vajk Szeverényi

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[6] The figures showing the position of the earrings and the object drawings were prepared by Hajnalka Binder (MNM-NÖK), while the photos were made by Tibor Takács (MNM-NÖK). I would like to thank them for their work. I am also indebted to Mónika Nagy (MNM-NÖK) who improved the style of the text in many ways, and to Gábor Ilon (MNM-NÖK) for his help in writing this paper.

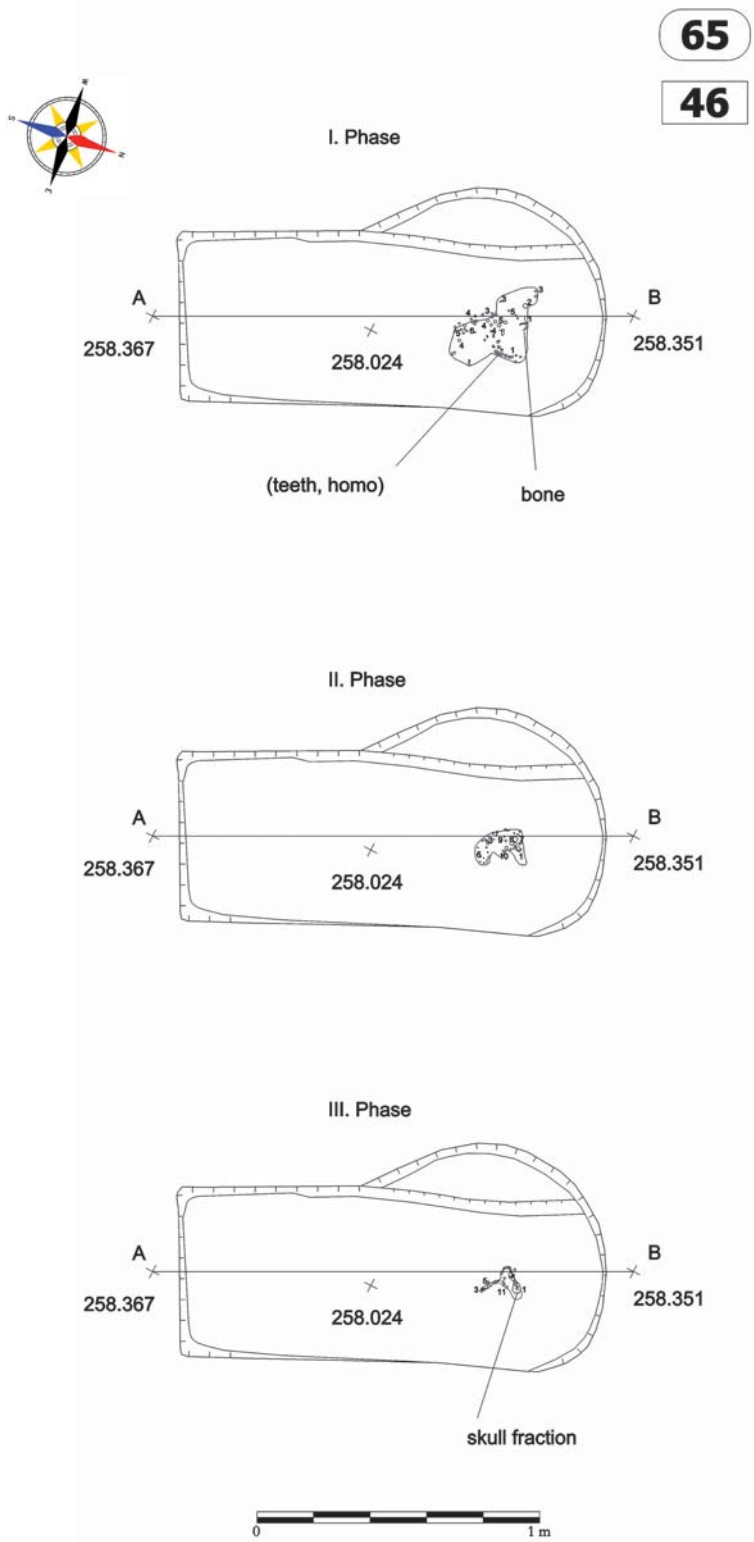

Fig. 1: Grave 2 of the cemetery of Kőszeg-Kőszegfalvi rétek

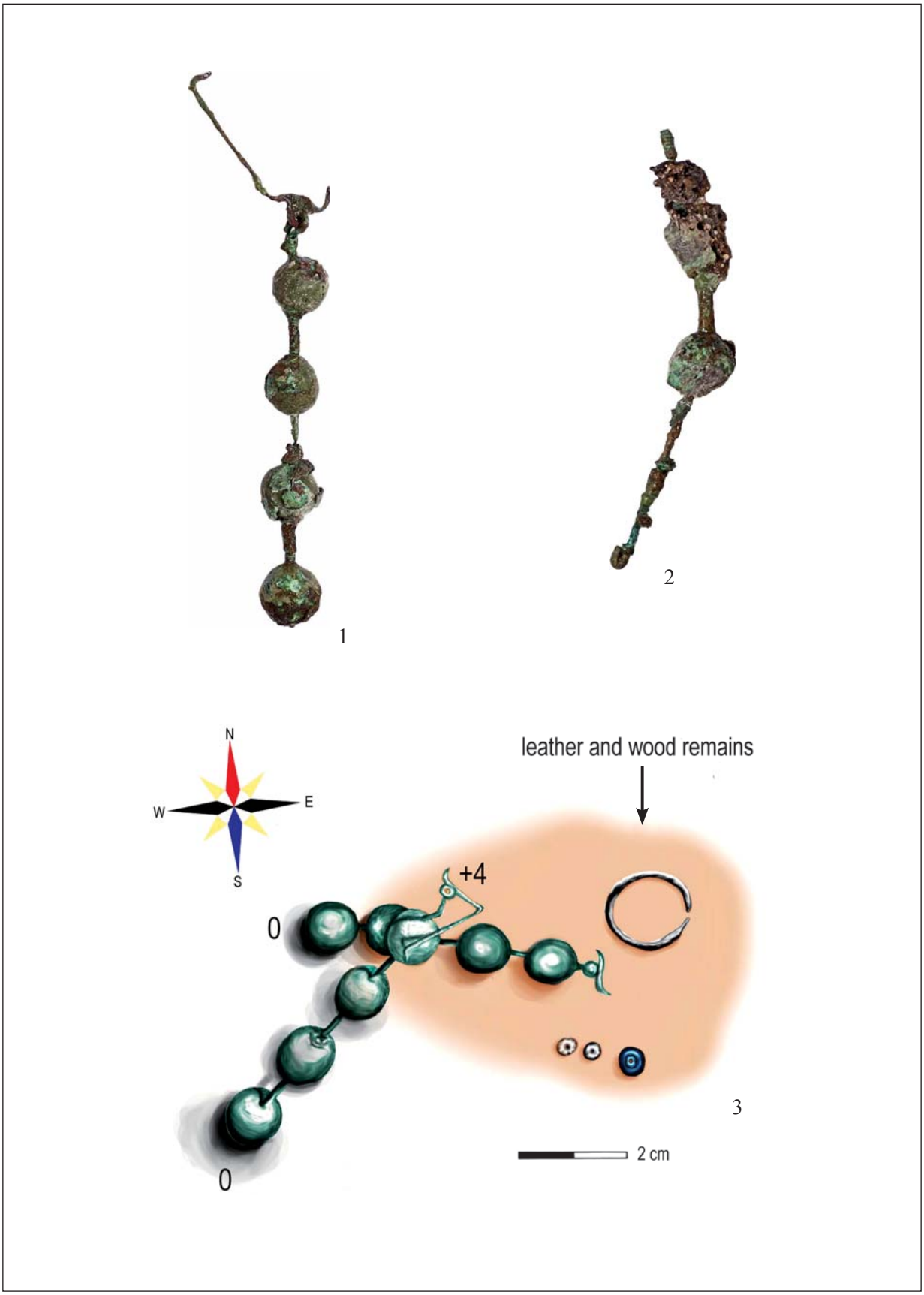

Fig. 2: 1–2: The bronze earrings with beadrow pendants; 3: In situ site of the earrings

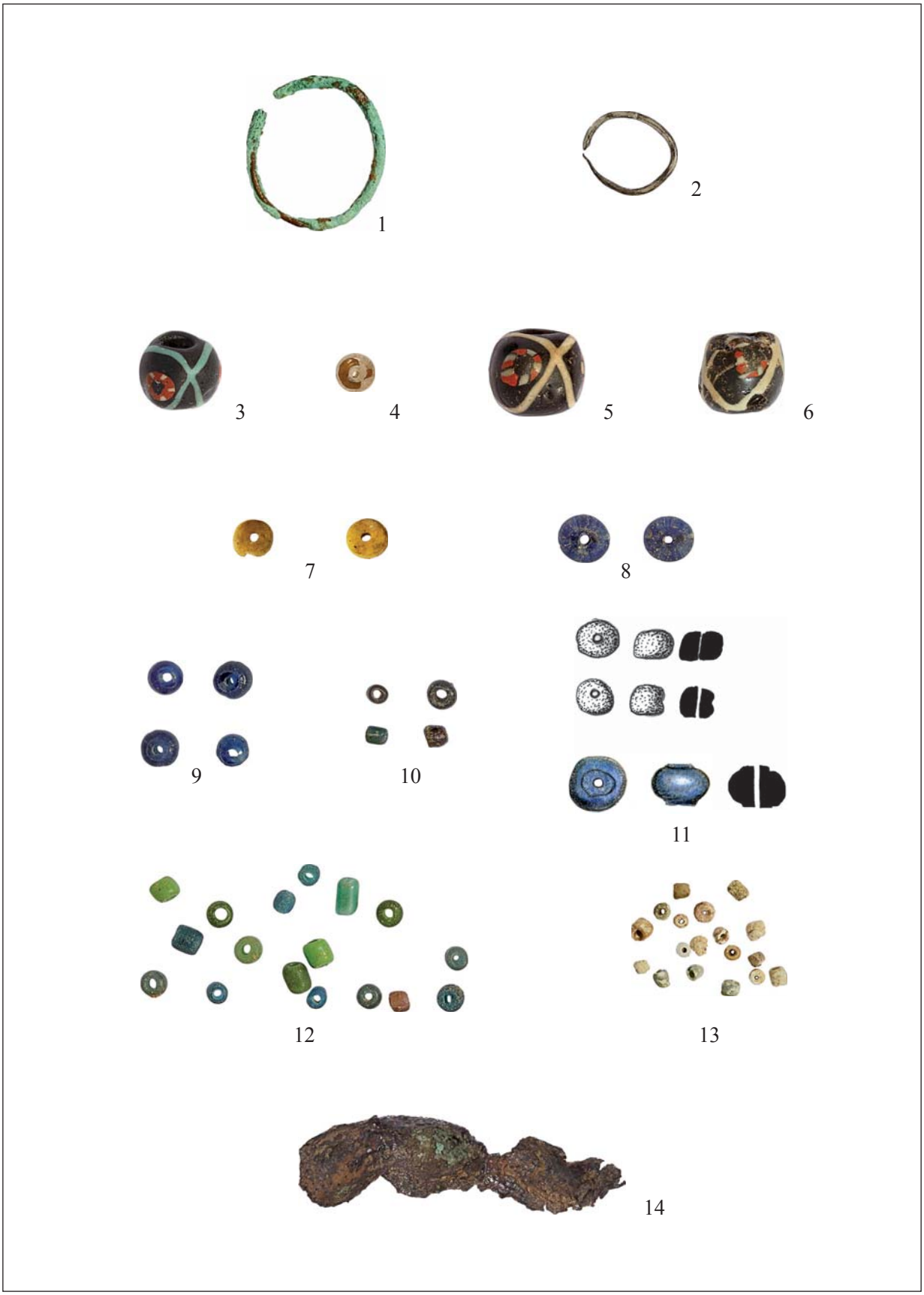

Fig. 3: Grave goods from the Grave 2

THE ANALYSIS OF POTTERY FROM 10TH–11TH-CENTURY GRAVES IN THE CARPATHIAN BASIN. TECHNOLOGICAL AND TYPO-CHRONOLOGICAL STUDIES

Szabina MERVA

The topic of my paper is the investigation of ceramic vessels from 10th–11th-century graves. The relative homogeneity of the ceramic material of the period (when compared to other periods) makes the collection of vessels especially important, since at the present state of research it is 10th-century metal objects that provide a secure date for pottery, and not the other way round, or only very rarely. The increasing number of excavations at settlements and cemeteries has yielded lot of new information for research on Conquest Period and Árpád Period pottery, which provides a good opportunity to rethink and continue the topic of J. Kvassay's dissertation.[1] The increasing precision of the internal chronology of the period, new scientific methods and the increased number of finds all shed new light on 10th–11th-century ceramics, and our investigations provide new information regarding both technology and chronology.

The study area is the northern part of the Carpathian Basin until the line of the Danube, including the Upper Tisza region, the northern part of the area east of the Tisza to Bihar in the east and the Sebes-Körös River in the south, the northern third of the Danube–Tisza interfluve to the southern border of Pest and Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok Counties, and Northern Hungary.

In the first phase of collecting data from the Carpathian Basin I chose this area because of the following reasons:

a) A number of well-defined regions with larger concentrations of cemeteries (the Zemplén, Borsod, Szabolcs, Heves, Middle Tisza, Hajdú-Bihar, the Danube Bend and the Nógrád blocks) are located within this area.
b) The analyses of most of the cemeteries of these regions have already been published, thus an appropriate amount of information is available for the study of ceramics from graves.
c) A large enough sample (95 vessels from 84 sites) is available for study.
d) The excavation of 10th–11th-century settlements carried out and partly published in the area – Borsod-Edelény (WOLF 1992; WOLF 2003; WOLF 2006), Felsőzsolca-Várdomb, Karos-Tobolyka, Mezőkeresztes-Cethalom, Mezőkeresztes-Lucernás (SIMONYI 2010), Szikszó-Vadászpatak (WOLF 1993) – all provide lot of additional information on the pottery of the period.
e) The study of vessels from 10th–11th-century graves may serve as the basis for the collection of the material from the rest of the Carpathian Basin.

HISTORY OF RESEARCH

Strictly speaking, previously only one researcher investigated the ceramics from the graves of the period. Despite this fact, I find it important to briefly review prior research, since fundamental works had been published on the topic before J. Kvassay's dissertation and during the past three

[1] I would like to express my gratitude to M. Wolf for allowing access to the materials from Borsod-Edelény and Szikszó and her generous help, to dr. L. Révész for supporting my research and his selfless help, to dr. T. Vida, my supervisor for his invaluable guidance and to dr. M. Takács and dr. J. Kvassay for the personal consultations. I should like to thank J. Puskás, museum keeper and potter for his help and advice (Hungarian National Museum, Budapest), dr. E. Istvánovits, A. Jakab (András Jósa Museum, Nyíregyháza), dr. T. Pusztai, Gy. Kalászdy (Ottó Herman Museum, Miskolc), K. A. Szilágyi, T. Faragóné Csutak (Déri Museum, Debrecen), D. Gašaj, E. Miroššayová (East Slovakian Museum, Košice), dr. L. Fodor, S. Tanyi (István Dobó Castle Museum, Eger), T. Majcher (Ferenc Kubinyi Museum, Szécsény), dr. K. Kővári (Ignác Tragor Museum, Vác), J. Lakatos (Börzsöny Museum, Szob), dr. L. Madaras (János Damjanich Museum, Szolnok), P. Langó (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Research Centre for the Humanities, Institute of Archaeology, Budapest), dr. J. Laszlovszky (Central European University, Department of Medieval Studies) and Zs. Petkes (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Research Centre for the Humanities, Institute of History, Hungarian Prehistory Research Team) for allowing access to their materials.

decades as well. These had laid the ground for later research in this area and raised a number of important questions and the need to collect the mostly intact vessels associated with datable finds in closed assemblages throughout the Carpathian Basin.

About 60 years after the first publication of a Conquest Period grave, J. Hampel in his early works (HAMPEL 1896, 78, 80, 105; HAMPEL 1907, 106, Pl. 5) only mentioned in passing that the graves contained pottery as well; due to the focus on metal artefacts, their study was neglected. Research on pottery, both from the Árpád Period and the 10th century, can be connected to J. Höllrigl's work from 1930 and 1933 (HÖLLRIGL 1930; HÖLLRIGL 1933). Observations on the technology of medieval pottery were first made by I. Holl (HOLL 1956) and N. Parádi (PARÁDI 1959). N. Parádi collected and published vessels dated by coins in the 1963 issue of Archaeológiai Értesítő, pointing out two 11th-century vessels as well (PARÁDI 1963). B. Szőke's 1955 article on clay cauldrons is of fundamental importance (SZŐKE 1955), and we have to mention the publications by K. Mesterházy (MESTERHÁZY 1975) and I. Fodor as well (FODOR 1985), which investigated the eastern connections of vessels with ribbed neck. In 1969 A. Kiss published an article on 10th–11th-century graves with vessels (KISS 1969). J. Kovalovszki's excavations at Doboz-Hajdúirtás had for a long time provided the basis for the dating of early settlements (KOVALOVSZKI 1975).

J. Kvassay's above-mentioned dissertation (KVASSAY 1982; KVASSAY 1984) was the first complete collection of vessels from 10th–11th-century graves. The comprehensive database of the work still provides the basis for any research on the pottery of the period, especially since before that only a few selected vessel types had been investigated more thoroughly. M. Takács' fundamental work on the clay cauldrons of the Carpathian Basin was published at about the same time (TAKÁCS 1986), and his later work in the Little Hungarian Plain also focused on the improvement of the chronology of the period (TAKÁCS 1993; TAKÁCS 1996). Thanks to the increasing number of rescue excavations, settlement material from the period is continuously accumulating, and the publications provide a large amount of new data (LÁZÁR 1998; VÉKONY 2002; TAKÁCS 1996b; TAKÁCS 2006; SIMONYI 2001; SIMONYI 2001a; SIMONYI 2005). U. Fiedler published a review of the problems of 8th–10th-century settlements in the Carpathian Basin (FIEDLER 1994). M. Wolf made new observations in connection with the ceramic material from the 10th-century settlement from Borsod-Edelény, dated before the construction of the 11th-century earthwork (WOLF 1992; WOLF 2003; WOLF 2006). Thanks to the vigorous settlement research in northeast Hungary, E. Simon was able to provide a review of the ceramic technologies of the period, with the inclusion of the results of natural scientific analyses (SIMONYI 2005; SIMONYI 2010), while H. Herold was able to observe certain tendencies in the material of early medieval settlements based on her regional studies (HEROLD 2006). After J. Kvassay's work, J. Szigeti has contributed to the study of 10th–11th-century pottery from funerary contexts in connection with the reanalysis of the cemetery of Halimba-Cseres (SZIGETI 2013). During the past 30 years, the number of 10th–11th-century cemeteries with ceramic grave-goods has increased considerably. The analysis of the 9th–12th-century cemetery of Čakajovce (Hung. Csekej) was published in 1995 (REJHOLCOVÁ 1995), while H. Ciugudean published a short analysis of the ceramic material from the 9th–11th-century cemetery of Alba Iulia-"*Staţia de Salvare*". (Hung. Gyulafehérvár-Mentőállomás) in 2007 (CIUGUDEAN 2007), which provided numerous new questions for future research. The material from the repeatedly investigated site of Oroszvár-Wiesenacker-dűlő has recently been analyzed, during which the author investigated the graves with ceramic grave-goods and the pottery of the site (HORVÁTH et al. 2012).

ASPECTS OF THE ANALYSIS OF THE POTTERY OF THE PERIOD TECHNOLOGY

The first analysis of medieval ceramic technology in the Carpathian Basin was carried out by I. Holl, using ethnographic examples as well (HOLL 1956), while N. Parádi reconstructed the technology of hand-wheeled pottery manufacture through a thorough analysis of Migration Period and Árpád Period vessels (PARÁDI 1959). M. Takács discussed in detail the manufacturing technologies of Árpád Period clay cauldrons (TAKÁCS 1983). E. Simonyi (SIMONYI 2005) and M. Wolf (SZILÁGYI et al. 2004) enriched our views on ceramic technologies through natural scientific investigations on Early Árpád Period ceramics from northeast Hungary. Recently Zs. Mersdorf reconstructed and demonstrated the manufacturing technologies of 9th-century hand-wheeled pottery from Zalavár (MERSDORF 2007). From the beginning, researchers generally accepted the view that the period was characterized almost exclusively by vessels made on the slow wheel (HÖLLRIGL 1930, 143; HÖLLRIGL 1933, 85; HOLL 1956, 177; PARÁDI 1959, 22; KVASSAY 1982, 18, 44; KVASSAY 1984, 174; TAKÁCS 1997, 208; TAKÁCS 1998, 56; WOLF 2003, 90, 95; WOLF 2006, 48; HEROLD 2004, 55; HEROLD 2006, 70–73; SIMONYI 2005, 46; SZŐKE

1980, 185; Kovalovszki 1975, 211; Mesterházy–Horváth 1983, 121; Fodor 1984, 106).

In the Conquest Period and Árpád Period, handmade pottery, characteristic for the preceding centuries, is not attested (Wolf 2003, 100–103; Wolf 2006, 54) or only in very small amounts (Kvassay 1982, 18; Mesterházy–Horváth 1983, 122; Takács 1996, 170; Takács 1986, 109–111; Lázár 1998, 15, 30, 32, 37, 41, 67, 74; see Vékony 2002, 27 for a review of the problem). The phenomenon is hardly surprising and can be explained with the survival of manufacturing traditions (Mesterházy–Horváth 1983, 122; Takács 1996, 170). Beside the probably imported amphora from Sóshartyán and the jug from Algyő (Kvassay 1982, 18), the literature sporadically mentions vessels and ceramic fragments turned on a fast wheel.[3] Based on, among others, the material discussed below we have to get rid of the commonplace that 10th–11th-century pottery manufacture was almost completely uniform. Technological variability can be demonstrated in the later phase of the Árpád Period as well (Takács 2009, 238).

Chronology

The problematic issues of the ceramic chronology of the period can be divided into three major groups. A number of issues are connected to the question to what extent can we distinguish Early Árpád Period pottery (10th–11th-century) from the settlement pottery of the preceding period (primarily the 9th-century) or to what extent can we distinguished 10th- century and 11th-century pottery? We have to discuss the real dating value of chronological more sensitive elements, especially in settlement material, where primarily types of decorations are available for analysis (with the largest amount of analyzable data). Finally we have to touch upon an important and debated topic: the chronological position of clay cauldrons, a characteristic, although quantitatively only minor, vessel type in the material.

According to the present state of research, the survival of Late Avars can be demonstrated archaeologically at least in the 9th-century (Szőke 1990, 153). Based on the observations made so far, this survival can be felt in ceramic manufacturing traditions as well. During his research, B. M. Szőke outlined the Late Avar ceramic material from the Körös region. Accordingly, the period is characterized by hand-wheeled pottery (20–30%), handmade pottery (70–80%), handmade cauldrons, handmade vessels with stamped lattice pattern (0.5%) and baking bells (1–2%) (these five types comprise Szőke's Group A). Based on his studies, these can be easily distinguished from Group B, which he dates to the Conquest and Árpád Periods and contains only hand-wheeled types (Szőke 1980, 182–188). Later on he modified his views and dated Group A to the 9th- century (Szőke 1988).

When examining the 10th–14th-century pottery of the Little Hungary Plain, M. Takács considered baking bells (Mosonszentmiklós-Egyéni földek, Lébény-Billedomb) (Takács 1996, 170) and handmade cauldrons (Takács 1986, 109–111), clay flasks and bowls with inverted rim (Takács 1997, 208) surviving elements of an earlier tradition and dated the appearance of hand-wheeled clay cauldrons to the 10th century (Takács 1986; Takács 1996). M. Wolf interpreted as archaic elements 10th century elongated jars, vessels with decoration on the inside of the rim and the survival of a characteristic 9th-century decorative motif, the incised wavy line bundle (Wolf 2003, 96, 2–3. kép, 7. kép). When examining Late Avar Period pottery from graves, T. Vida made the same observation and considered 10th century elongated jars decorated with line bundles and wavy line bundles as evidence for the survival of a Late Avar Period tradition.[4]

According to J. Kvassay's research, the survival of 8th–9th-century characteristics in the pottery from graves can be observed in the northern part of the Carpathian Basin, e.g. on the vessels of Bešeňov (Hung. Zsitvabesenyő), Grave 13 and Nitra (Hung. Nyitra), Grave 96 (Kvassay 1982, 10, 39). We have to mention the vessels from the cemeteries of Hurbanovo (Hung. Ógyalla), Michal nad Žitvaou (Hung. Szentmihályúr) and Tvrdošovce (Hung. Tardoskedd), which could be dated rather to the 9th-century. The situation is the same with Grave 61 at Zrnovec nad Váhom (Hung. Tornóc), where the

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[3] A rim fragment of a vessel with cylindrical, ribbed neck made on fast wheel was reported already in 1991 by D. Jankovich B. from Keszthely-Fenékpuszta (Trench 6, Hearth 3, lower layer, associated with the rim of a clay cauldron) (Jankovich 1991, 186, 192, 205, 9. kép 11), and a jug from Grave 2/VIII, Phase 2 from Alba Iulia-*"Staţia de Salvare"* (Hung. Gyulafehérvár) belongs here as well (Ciugudean 2007, 248, 251, Pl. 5. 2).

[4] I would like to thank T. Vida for allowing me to consult the manuscript of his MA Thesis. Vida T.: *A késő avar sírkerámia a Dunától keletre*. Budapest 1986.

form of the vessel is reminiscent of 9th-century shapes, but was associated with an S-terminalled ring (KVASSAY 1982, 40). A handmade vessel from the 10th-century Grave 35 of the Avar cemetery of Visznek-Kecskehegy fits nicely into the series of Avar Period grave pottery, but based on the associated finds it was dated to the 10th-century (KVASSAY 1982, 8, 232–233, XL. tábla, 2. kép). As opposed to J. Kvassay's opinion, who suggested that the vessels became lower through time, researchers now think that beside these lower pots, elongated versions appear as well, e.g. in the case of Borsod-Edelény (archaic elongated jars) (WOLF 2003, 96).

A typological examination draws attention to the pottery of certain graves in the cemetery of Halimba-Cseres. For example, the vessel of Grave 206 in itself "*does not fit the picture*", if we regard 10th–11th-century ceramics; we still cannot ignore the fact that the grave contained a thick, silver, ribbed S-terminalled ring, based on which the excavator placed the grave into the so-called third phase (second half of the 11th-century, beginning of the 12th-century) (TÖRÖK 1962, 161, Taf. XCII). Similarly, the vessel of Grave 50 was associated with a bronze S-terminalled ring, based on which Gy. Török dated this grave to the second phase. The case is similar with the vessel of Grave 47 (TÖRÖK 1962, 146, Taf. XLVI). Gy. Török based, among others, on these vessels the view that Avar Period pottery traditions survived in the undoubtly later phase of the site (TÖRÖK 1962, 54–63, 95–98). Beyond the fact, however, that their technology (low quality, handmade) and form differs from the rest, it is striking that incised line-bundles, a decorative motif interpreted as another important sign of survival, is missing from Halimba. U. Fiedler has noted that a group of vessels from 10th–11th-century graves are theoretically (typologically) characteristic for the 8th–9th-century material (e.g. Besenyő, Grave 83, Sered/Szered (Sl) Grave 8/55 (KVASSAY 1982, 29, 40), Prša/Perse (Sl) Graves 43 and 76, Bánov/Bánkeszi (Sl), Grave 25, Szeged-Algyő Grave 97) (FIEDLER 1994, 339–341).

U. Fiedler's study brought interesting, although controversial, results regarding 8th–9th–10th-century pottery, and raised important questions especially regarding the results presented so far. His main question is, whether the Conquering Hungarians produced already wheel-made clay cauldrons. According to U. Fiedler's research, this hypothesis (the presence of wheel-made clay cauldrons among the Conquering Hungarians) cannot be in fact proved through any datable find assemblages (FIEDLER 1994, 332). Fiedler was looking for evidence to connect B. M. Szőke Szőke's Group A and Conquest Period grave ceramics. He established that undecorated handmade vessels are practically missing from graves. Comb decorated vessels, generally characteristic for ceramic production, are present in B. M. Szőke Szőke's Group A, although only in small numbers. The cog-wheel pattern appears first in the 11th century, while B. M. Szőke's Group A is most certainly earlier than that! Baking bells and cauldrons are understandably missing from the graves.[5] Vessels with ribbed, cylindrical neck and bowls are attested in 10th-century settlement materials; they are, however, still missing from B. M. Szőke's Group A. Consequently, a comparison of Conquest Period pottery from burial contexts with B. M. Szőke's Group A, similar e.g. to Cs. Bálint's attempt to compare the settlement pottery from Eperjes with Late Avar Period pottery from graves from Kaján, is not yet possible as established by U. Fiedler (FIEDLER 1994, 342–344). Doubtlessly, the number of pottery from burial contexts is still so small that it remains a question whether it can be considered representative and suitable to analyze the ceramic manufacturing traditions of a certain region. One of the aims of this paper is to attempt to answer this question.

The first reaction on the part of Hungarian researchers was written by M. Takács, where he noted that knowledge of the material from north-east Bulgaria and southwest Romania can be assumed from U. Fiedler's arguments, but also noted that the study is outdated. Had the Austrian researcher's arguments been correct, we would have been forced to place the whole find horizon including belt sets to the 10th-century – which is a highly unlikely, unfounded, even absurd, suggestion (TAKÁCS 2009, 235).

M. Wolf considered the circle characterized by handmade vessels and baking bells (Avar Period and 9th-century material) and Árpád Period pottery (characterized by wheel-made clay cauldrons) easily separable from the material of early, 10th-century settlements (WOLF 2003, 99–100). M. Takács considers the publications of the ceramic finds from Borsod-Edelény the most recent example of a certain trend in the research on Árpád Period pottery (WOLF 2003, 85–107; WOLF 2006, 47–58). The author, M. Wolf tried to distinguish clearly 10th and 11th-century pottery in the whole Carpathian Basin. According to M. Takács, with this she revives the theory of the Méri school, since she considers

[5] According to U. Fiedler it is logical (although not more than that, since it cannot be proven) that cooking vessels were not placed in the graves. As a consequence, only those cooking pots were used that were suitable to contain single dishes (FIEDLER 1994, 342).

proven the existence of a clear difference between 10th and 11th century pottery (Takács 2009, 237).

Furthermore, an important example should be born in mind when discussing the possibility of distinguishing 9th–11th-century ceramic material: in my opinion the *general* use of handmade vessels in the 10th–11th-centuries has been neither proven nor dismissed convincingly yet. In an article from 1984, I. Fodor drew attention to an unpublished material: in 1965, during N. Parádi's excavation at Békés-Ditér, a reconstructable baking bell was found and "*in the immediate vicinity of the baking bell, in the fill above the layer with charred wood*" a silver coin of Stephen III (1162–1172) was discovered (CNH I. 119).[6] Based on this it seems certain that the use of handmade baking bells cannot be excluded with certainty even in the 12th century. However, fragments of baking bells were found in the Early Árpád Period Feature 449 (a house) at Ménfőcsanak-Szeles dűlő associated with a pottery fragment decorated with cog-wheel pattern, and in Feature 418 (an oven) associated with a pottery fragment decorated with scroll.

M. Takács emphasized (Takács 2009, 236) that according to the results of numerous settlement excavations, there is no clear break between the ceramic material of the 10th and 11th-centuries,[7] thus we cannot date them to a shorter period than two centuries. He argues that publications of pottery from burials have shown that characteristic vessel and/or rim forms dated to the 10th-century appear in 11th-century contexts as well. He mentions as exception the vessel type with cylindrical ribbed neck that has not yet been found in a securely dated 11th-century grave. My database, however, does not fully support this statement, since only 4% of the available vessels can be dated to the 11th-century, and altogether 13% to the end of the 10th-or the beginning of the 11th-century. So far 11 vessels with cylindrical neck have been found in the region, and one without handle from Miskolc-Repülőtér was dated based on the date of the cemetery to the turn of the millennium. I find these data insufficient to decide whether this object type should be dated only to the first half of the period under study.

In connection with chronological problems we have to discuss the chronological sensitivity of the best observable decoration types (on ceramics from both settlements and graves). N. Parádi's article, which was published almost fifty years ago, is still one of the best reviews of the issue (Parádi 1963). Four of the assemblages discussed by him are relevant for our period of study. The vessel of Jászberény-Borsóhalom is decorated with incised scrolls and dated by 596 coins of Duke Béla (1046–1060; CNH.I.15) and 72 coins of Béla I (1060–1063; CNH.I.16). Two vessels found near Zemun are decorated with a single wavy line with incised scrolls beneath it on the shoulder of one, and with incised wavy lines on the shoulder of the other. They are dated with the gold coins of Michael VII Doukas (1071–1078) and Nikephoros III (1078–1081) and the silver coins of László I (1077–1095) (CNH.I.26, 27, 28). From Andornaktálya a vessel with cog-wheel pattern together with ca. 150 Kálmán denars (1095–1116; CNH.I.38, 41, 43) had been delivered to the museum (Parádi 1963, 207, 1. kép 1–3, 222, 14. kép 1–2a). The series of coin finds are complemented by the find of Tadten, Austria (Hung. Mosontétény), with coins dated around 1130 and a jar decorated with wavy lines (Steininger 1985, Kat. Nr. 1).

Although in smaller numbers, but we do have at our disposal ceramic finds from settlement contexts and burials documented on excavations and dated by coins to the Early Árpád Period. From Pit 19 at Esztergom-Szentgyörgymező, rim and wall fragments of vessels decorated with incised line bundles, wavy lines, nail impressions and cog-wheel pattern (Lázár 1998, 71, 55. kép) were found in association with a Salamon coin (1063–1074) (Lázár 1998, 71, 73). The feature had been dug into a house, whose fill contained the neck fragment of a vessel with ribbed neck, decorated with impressed dots, and sherds of jars decorated with incised wavy line bundles, nail impressions, wavy lines and scrolls (Lázár 1998, 24–26, 51–53. kép). In the fill of Feature 559 (a house) at Ménfőcsanak-Bevásárlóközpont, a Duke Béla coin (1048–1060) (Tomka 2000, 10) provides a date for the sherds decorated with wavy line, scroll, garland and a band of scrolls.

From the Conquest Period, vessels from graves dated by coins are attested only in six cases. The vessel from Grave 8 at Balatonújlak-Erdő dűlő, M7/3-37 (Langó–Siklósi 2013, 147–148) is decorated by a combination of a double wavy line, a double line, a triple wavy line and two triple line bundles. It has to be noted that all the elements run around the circumference of the vessel. The grave is dated by a Milanese coin of Hugo of Provence. Apparently, a vessel decorated by line bundles in

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6 After Fodor 1984, 106, note 64, based on the registry of the Hungarian National Museum (MNM), Békés-Ditér, excavation documentation (MNM Archives Ha 2000.VI./36, 82.1.1.B. MNM, 82.1.4.B. MNM).

7 This kind of investigation was first carried out by J. Gy. Szabó (Szabó 1975, 23–24).

three rows running around its circumference at Budapest-Szentlőrinc, Gloriette, was associated with a coin of Lothar II (LÁSZLÓ 1942, 799; FEHÉR et al. 1962, 124). In Grave II/1 of Kapos-Eperjesszög (RÉVÉSZ 1996, 15–16), the undecorated, handmade vessel is dated by a non-perforated, flattened silver dirham. The undecorated jar from Grave II/37 of Kenézlő-Fazekaszug (FETTICH 1931, 89) was associated with a silver coin (Pavia, Rodolphe de Bourgogne, 922–926), perforated in two places. Grave 60 from the cemetery of Szob-Kiserdő (BAKAY 1978, 29–33), dated by 11 west European silver coins (four Charles the Bald coins, four Berengar I [888–915] coins, two coins of Hugo of Provence [926–931] and an undefined west European coin), yielded a jar decorated with an incised wavy line with a fast amplitude on the shoulder and incised scrolls below, down to the lower two fifth of the vessel. Finally, we have to mention Grave 4 from Tiszanána-Csehtanya, where a cooking pot with wavy line and line bundle decoration was found together with 11 West European coins (Charles the Bald's four perforated coins [840–875], Berengar I's [888–915] four perforated Milanese coins, Hugo of Provence's [926–931] two perforated coins, and one undetermined Milanese (?) coin) (RÉVÉSZ 2008, 287).

Obviously, the above 13 assemblages dated by coins do not provide a proper basis for drawing wide-reaching conclusions, but ignoring them would be a mistake as well. The decorations of vessels from well-dated contexts provide the following picture: the time-span of the use of the types cannot be narrowed down based on the available data. We have to draw special attention on the motif of the wavy line bundle, which is interpreted as a surviving element, and appears just as much on vessels from the end of the 11th-century (e.g. the vessel found between Sremski Karlovci and Zemun), as on the 10th-century vessel of Tiszanána. Of the 14 finds only one is a jar decorated with cog-wheel pattern, from the 12th-century assemblage of Andornaktálya.

Settlement finds reflect a similar situation. If we examine the combination of motifs observable on one vessel, for example at the Early Árpád Period settlement of Ménfőcsanak-Szeles dűlő,[8] the following can be established: wavy line bundles appear together with line bundles, nail impressions and scrolls; line bundles appear together with wavy line bundles, scrolls, wavy lines and nail impressions. Densely incised scroll was attested once with cog-wheel pattern (!) as well, thus it is certainly coeval with most other decorative motifs. The most widely attested scroll appears together with wavy lines, nail impressions, lines bundles and garlands on the same vessel, while wavy lines appear together with scrolls, wavy line bundles, line bundles and nail impressions. In the case of the later cog-wheel pattern and garland motifs (perhaps dated to the second part of the period) we could observe that garlands were combined only with scrolls, while cog-wheel pattern is usually on its own, and was attested once associated with a densely incised scroll (and once with line bundle from the rampart of Sopron – which is very rare), and once associated with nail impressions. If we accept the assumption that the increased number of combinations may be connected to dating, then we can establish that beside the cog-wheel pattern and the garland, all the other motifs are characteristic throughout these two centuries; more exactly, the date of their first appearance cannot yet be established with more precision. Future research might be able to shed light upon the change of the proportion of decorated vessels during these two centuries. Due to the fragmentation of settlement ceramics, we do not yet have reliable data at our disposal, and we cannot yet draw conclusions regarding the temporal changes of vessel forms and rim types.

Finally, we have to mention the difficulties of dating Early Árpád Period clay cauldrons. It has been put forward as an axiom rather early in the history of research that hand-wheeled clay cauldrons are a vessel type brought into the Carpathian Basin by the conquering Hungarians; thus, it is ethnically specific and was a by-product of their semi-nomadic lifestyle. In the already mentioned 1933 article on Árpád Period ceramics, J. Höllrigl studied clay cauldrons as well, and established that it is a characteristic vessel form of the semi-nomadic Hungarians (HÖLLRIGL 1933, 93). He dated it to the 12th–13th-centuries, just like K. Szabó, who also defined it as a characteristic vessel type of semi-nomadic camps (SZABÓ 1938, 25). Based on his surveys in the Rábaköz area, B. Szőke regarded it a 10th-century, ethnically specific vessel type. According to his research, this was supported by the fact that the type is very rare in Somogy County, which was an area occupied by Slavs in the 10th-century; such vessels are missing from Moravian, Czech or Austrian areas as well (SZŐKE 1955, 90). In contrast to these earlier opinions, however, based on M. Wolf's results it can now be stated that there is a group of early settlements whose material is characterized by jars of various sizes, flower pot shaped bowls and vessels with ribbed neck, but not by clay cauldrons (WOLF 2003, 100–103) (e.g. Borsod-Edelény (WOLF 1992; WOLF 2003; WOLF 2006), Örménykút (HEROLD 2004),

[8] I would like to thank here again M. Takács for allowing me to analyze the material of the Early Árpád Period settlement at Ménfőcsanak.

Esztergom-Szentgyörgymező[9]). When discussing the chronology of Örménykút, H. Herold dated Phase 3 (between the Avar and Árpád Periods) to the 10th century based on analogies and after excluding other possibilities (Herold 2004, 63).

After the collection of data by J. Kvassay it became clear that clay cauldrons have not been attested in the graves of the conquering Hungarians,[10] and during my work I have not yet found this vessel type either as a vessel from a grave containing food or among the sherds found in the fill of the graves. Among the known vessel forms, beside pithoi, churning vessels and larger jars (except for the vessel of Grave 251 at Ibrány-Esbóhalom) clay cauldrons are also conspicuously missing from graves. A possible explanation might be that large cooking and storage vessels were simply not placed in graves (Takács 1997, 206), although this custom has been attested among other peoples (Fodor 1984, 106; Takács 1986, 23, Notes 277–278, 25, Notes 297 and 308, 26, Notes 318–319, 131, Note 996). Based on her settlement research, M. Wolf is of the opinion that there is a chronological difference between the vessels of the 10th century and the clay cauldrons. She dates the latter to the 12th–13th centuries, noting that clay cauldrons are characteristic not only for the material of villages, but also appear in royal courts, cities and monasteries as well, localities hardly describable as semi-nomadic. She tries to solve the contradiction of low number of clay cauldrons in the Upper Tisza region and their lack in the Bodrogköz and Rétköz area by suggesting a chronological difference between the materials of these regions (Wolf 2003, 100–103). Takács interpreted the areas with a low number of clay cauldron finds as regions outside the habitation area of the semi-nomadic, pastoralist population (Takács 1986, 136–137; Takács 1996a, 336). In his latest article, M. Takács cites three finds of clay cauldrons associated with vessels with ribbed neck as counter examples (Takács 2009, 237). In 1966 A. Habovštiak published the material of the semi-subterranean House 5/63 at Bíňa-LPG Station (Hung. Bény) (Habovštiak 1966, Abb. 29, 1–4, 15). Stratigraphic observations indicated that this house lay below the fortified hilltop settlement, which had most probably been founded at the time of the formation of the Hungarian state, at the turn of the 10th and 11th-centuries (Habovštiak 1966, 467–479). Due to its stratigraphic position, the above scholar considers this clay cauldron rim important evidence in the chronological discussion. The second counter argument is provided by Feature 16 at Sľažany-Poloha Domovina (Hung. Szelezsény). Here a clay cauldron fragment was associated in the same stratigraphic unit with a bipartite lyre-shaped buckle[11] (Ruttkay 1992, Abb. 9.5, 11.6). The third piece of evidence are two finds of hand wheeled clay cauldrons dated to the "*end of the Avar Period*": one from Kompolt-Kistér and another from Mártély-Szegfűdomb (B. Nagy 1984, 241). The significance of the round-based cauldron from Kompolt is that in Feature 406, 38 pieces of a single reconstructable vessel were found in a stratigraphically well-defined context. It was considered impossible that the association of these vessels and the sherds from the end of the Avar Period could be dated to the 11th-century (Takács 2009, 237).

The literature contains numerous other examples where the association of the two types in the same context was attested. For example, in Feature B/1993 at Tatabánya-Dózsakert "*densely incised pieces and many sherds of various types of vessels with ribbed neck and of clay cauldrons with shell-shaped handle made on a slow wheel were found*" (Vékony 2002, 32, 41, 5. kép). A vessel with ribbed neck made on a fast wheel was found together with the rim of a clay cauldron in the lower layer of Oven 3 in Trench 6 at Keszthely-Fenékpuszta (Jankovich 1991, 186, 192, 205, 9. kép 11). At Pápa-Hanta, the fill of Feature 1995/1 also yielded rim fragments of a vessel with ribbed neck and of a clay cauldron (Ilon 1996, 302, 311, 1. tábla). This issue leads, however, to the problems of the classification and chronology of vessels with ribbed neck. In my opinion, in lack of a full catalogue of such vessels, it is impossible to date the type more precisely than these two centuries.

To determine the beginning of the use of Early Árpád Period clay cauldrons we need more regional studies and more secure chronological fix points than the ones mentioned above to be able to reach a conclusion.

At present it is not entirely clear whether the causes of the discrepancies between these opinions are really chronological differences, or differences in regional characteristics. It would be useful to examine the material of Late Árpád Period settlements to establish whether they are also characterized by

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9 There is only a single rim of clay cauldron is known from the 10th–11th century settlement of Esztergom-Szentgyörgymező, see the material of Pit 14: Inv. nr. 82.49.11. The author dated it to the turn of the 11th–12th centuries with a single reference to Fodor 1977, 343, where jar-shaped clay cauldrons are discussed: Lázár 1998, 29, Fig. 20. 1.

10 There is only one exception, in the fill of the grave of Dabas; the association of the find with the grave, however, has recently been refuted by L. Kovács (Kovács 1985, 377).

11 This buckle variant was dated recently by P. Langó to the 10th century (Langó 2007, 250, Abb. 157).

a mosaic-like diversity as is assumed here for the Early Árpád Period (that is, can we talk about settlements with and without clay cauldrons in the later phases as well?). Without attempting to answer them, we have to mention other, fundamental questions as well that may help clarify these issues: Can we talk about regional workshops and generally what kind of organization may have been characteristic for pottery manufacture in the Carpathian Basin at that time? Should we expect specialization, as indicated by the technology of the clay cauldrons?

Even within the Little Hungarian Plain important regional differences can be observed regarding Early Árpád Period sites with clay cauldrons. It is accepted as a fact by most researchers that the ramparts of the fortified sites of the period of state formation and the first decades of the 11th century (e.g. Sopron, Moson) did not yield any clay cauldrons, although we should not draw far-reaching conclusions from this. Clay cauldrons were not found in any of the Early Árpád Period settlements of Sopron and its vicinity. We have to emphasize the low number of clay cauldrons dated to the Early Árpád Period: for example, at the 10th–11th-century site of Ménfőcsanak-Szeles, approx. 5% of the ceramic material is clay cauldron. Ca. one-third of the features at Ménfőcsanak, seven can be dated with garland motif or cog-wheel pattern, thus these can be placed with certainty to the 11th-century. With regard to the rest of features we can consider certain the two-century-long interval based on the typology of clay cauldron rims elaborated by M. Takács for the Little Hungarian Plain. We cannot date any of the clay cauldrons of the site to the 10th-century with certainty, but we have to emphasize that this is true for all other vessel types and decorative motifs as well, thus the possibility cannot be excluded.

Previous research thus indicates that based on the sites in and around Sopron and Győr, we have only one securely dated element: the appearance of the cog-wheel pattern in the 11th-century – and the spread of the clay cauldrons can probably dated to this period as well. Due to the low number of finds, however, the start of the use of the latter cannot be established yet.

Although it might seem evident, we still have to emphasize that the conquering Hungarians settled down in an area with mosaic-like diversity in terms of climate, vegetation, soils, morphology (SÜMEG et al. 2003, 51–52) and culture. Consequently, it would be a mistake to apply a uniform scheme for the whole Carpathian Basin. We can obtain reliable results only if we examine the internal chronology of each region. Like in all other periods, it may happen here as well that the survival of local traditions and the regional different dynamics of the development of pottery manufacture create a situation where the ceramic material of the Carpathian Basin shows much greater vertical similarities than horizontal ones; e.g. the 10th-century pottery of a region might be more similar to the 9th-century material of the same region than the contemporary pottery of another region. As an example we may refer to the comparison of the decorative motifs used at two sites in the Little Hungarian Plain, at Bácsa-Szend Vid domb (9th–10th-century; TOMKA 1991, 56; TOMKA 2000, 13–14; TOMKA 2002, 139–140) and Ménfőcsanak-Szeles dűlő (10th–11th-centuries; TAKÁCS 2006, 538; TAKÁCS 2010, 5), to establish their chronological relation to each other. The method highlights the problems of the previous statements, but also the possibilities inherent in the separate study of selected motifs. I admit that the study of a single element outside the context of material groups, rim types, etc. may lead to erroneous conclusions. Nevertheless, we may still not consider this experiment – for the very same reason – useless. The large proportion of much more micaceous ceramic material from Bácsa, fired under reducing conditions, is different at the first glance from the material from Ménfőcsanak. It remains a question, however, whether this is caused by chronological difference or is connected to the difference between partly coeval manufacturing traditions. With regard to vessel types we can establish that at Bácsa (in primary contexts) the dominant type is the jar, while the Early Árpád Period features of Ménfőcsanak yielded three dominant types, the jar, the hand-wheeled clay cauldron and the baking bell; neither sites yielded handmade clay cauldrons. In my opinion it cannot be demonstrated beyond doubt that there was no chronological overlap between the two sites; that the settlement of Bácsa, which was certainly occupied in the 9th-century, did not survive into the 10th-century. The statistical study (chi-square test, *Appendix 2: Fig. 1*) of the decorative motifs used at the two sites indicate that at Ménfőcsanak the ratio of decorated vessels increased, although only slightly. At Bácsa we find more sherds decorated with line bundles or wavy line bundles, significantly less sherds with scrolls, much more sherds with the combination of wavy line and line bundle, more sherds with wavy line and much more sherds with densely incised scrolls than at Ménfőcsanak. The cog-wheel pattern is missing altogether from the primary fill of the features at Bácsa-Szend Vid domb.[12]

[12] Árpád Period and late medieval material is known from secondary contexts.

Now we have to reformulate the problem discussed so far: what is 10th-century pottery like? During our studies we could establish that based on the comparison of vessel forms and decorative motifs, 10th-century pottery can be more easily distinguished from 11th-century material than from 9th-century material. Based on this research we may say that there are two well-dated elements: clay cauldrons can be dated to the 11th-century and later and the cog-wheel pattern appears in the same century. We can date these ceramic finds to the 11th-century with some certainty, although they make up only a small portion of the ceramic material. The above-mentioned decorative motifs, which can be dated only to a longer time-span of two or three centuries, do not make it possible to properly distinguish between 10th and 11th-century pottery, sometimes not even between 9th and 10th-century pottery. Thus, we can talk about 9th-century, 9th–10th-century, 10th–11th-century and 11th-century assemblages, but not about an exact dating to the one hundred years of the 10th-century, at least in the case of settlement material.

The aim of this present study is to collect and evaluate the mostly intact ceramic finds from close contexts, i.e. from Conquest Period graves, dated to the 10th–11th-centuries by other finds, and to provide some answers to the questions raised by the study of ceramics from contemporary settlement contexts. Here the results of the first phase of the research, the analysis of 95 ceramic finds are published. The final aim of the research is to delineate the possibilities of dating both the survival 9th–10th-century settlements and those, which could have been the earliest settlements of the Hungarian Conquestors.

General data

The analysis of the area under study was carried out based on the relevant previous research (J. Kvassay's dissertation: Kvassay 1982; Kvassay 1984), through the collection, review and analysis of the data in the literature. I will attempt a classification of 10th–11th-century pottery from burial contexts based on technological investigations, the elaboration of a typological scheme and well-dated finds in burials. With regard to the technological investigations, I could work only with the vessels I had access to (95 exemplars). All the other conclusions are based on authentically excavated finds and contexts. Based on the available data I collected 84 sites with burials that contained clay vessels; of these, 127 graves from 74 sites were authentically excavated.

Geographic distribution of graves with vessels

Although we do not have published data on all the known 10th–11th-century sites, the following can be discerned from the literature: in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County and the Slovakian part of the Bodrogköz area 64 cemeteries are known (Révész 1992, 93; Révész 1996, 206; Nevizánszky 1994, 174–175), of which ten had a burial with a vessel. Of the 24 sites in Transcarpathia, three have yielded a vessel as well (Kobály 2001, 207–209, 213–219). In the Rétköz area six of the 30 Conquest Period cemeteries contained a burial with a vessel (Istvánovits 2003, 354). In Hajdú-Bihar County, of the 78 registered cemeteries (Nepper 2002, 15–16) 11 are relevant for our topic. In the area of Heves County, the custom of providing food in the grave was documented through the presence of a vessel in ten of the 45 10th–11th-century cemeteries (Révész 1996a, 256). In Nógrád County ca. 45 sites have been counted so far,[13] of which only a single grave with a clay vessel is known. The new site registers of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok and Pest Counties are not complete yet,[14] thus we have only incomplete data from these areas (*Fig. 1*). Based on the ratio of the number of vessels in a cemetery (vessels from graves and stray vessels from the area of the cemetery) and the total number of graves, 18 cemeteries deserve attention in terms of the "*frequency of graves with clay vessels*".[15]

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13 I would like to thank J. János for this information.

14 Madaras 1996, 80. Madaras registered 32 cemeteries of the elite and middle classes within the area of the county, but did not include commoners' cemeteries. The sites of the counties in question were last collected fully in 1962.

15 Kenézlő-Fazekaszug II: 5/25, Karos-Eperjesszög III: 3/19, Streda nad Bodrogom-Bálványhegy/Bodrogszerdahely (Sl): 2/11, Bodroghalom-Eresztvényhomok: 4/27, Dormánd-Hanyipuszta: 2+1/17, Karos-Eperjesszög I: 2+1/13, Tiszaeszlár-Fenyvespart: 2/13, Szolnok-Ugar: 6/28, Miskolc-Repülőtér: 1+3/21, Karos-Eperjesszög II: 10/73, Tímár-Béke Tsz. I: 3/41, Eger-Szépasszonyvölgy: 2/36, Szob-Vendelin: 12/142, Szob-Kiserdő: 7/108, Kistokaj-Homokbánya: 4/79, Nagyhalász-Zomborhegy: 2/45, Törökszentmiklós-Szenttamás: 2/46. Name of site: number of graves with clay vessel/number of excavated graves. Only cemeteries or parts of cemeteries with more than ten graves were included, furthermore only those sites than yielded more than one vessel.

The proportion of graves with vessels at these sites fluctuates between 20% and 4%, while at other sites this number is even lower. These cemeteries, that are fairly rich in ceramic finds, appear mostly in the Upper Tisza region, although two cemeteries each can be found in Heves County, the Middle Tisza region and around the Ipoly mouth as well.

GRAVES WITH VESSELS AND SOCIETY

The social categorization of cemeteries is far from unproblematic (ISTVÁNOVITS 2003, 442–449; MADARAS 1996, 76; RÉVÉSZ 1992, 107; 2008), since the classic commoner-"*middle class*"-elite terms are not always usable, and research has already drawn a much more subtle picture. In my analysis I used the evaluation of the cemeteries and their analogies by the given authors, and carried out a relevant review based on data from 43 cemeteries. I tried to reduce somewhat the variety of terms (e.g. wealthy freemen, rich commoners) without impairing the whole picture. The following ratios can be discerned: 53% of the cemeteries with graves yielding vessels (23 cemeteries) belong to the commoners, 29% (12 cemeteries) belong to the "*middle class*" and 18% are cemeteries where elite burials were found as well. It has to be noted in connection with the latter that in the case of the richest cemeteries it was not always the wealthiest grave that contained the vessel (as in the case of the cemeteries of Szolyva, Streda nad Bodrogom/Bodrogszerdahely, Besenyőtelek, Tiszasüly); often they come from the less wealthy graves of the community (e.g. in the cemeteries of Karos I–III, Kenézlő, Tiszabezdéd). If we map these data it becomes clear that in the Upper Tisza region, graves containing vessels are found in the cemeteries of the commoners and the elite as well. Among these there is a chain of commoners' cemeteries (as far as the cemeteries of Gáva and Ibrány can be regarded as such) on the left and right banks of the Tisza: these are the cemeteries of Nagyhalász, Ibrány, Tiszabercel, Gáva, Szabolcs, Tímár and Tiszalök, where graves containing vessels were found. It has to be noted that these commoner cemeteries are not uniform in terms of burial rites and ceramic finds (decoration, base stamps). There is a group of cemeteries with clay vessels in Heves County that belong to the "*middle class*" (Aldebrő, Dormánd, Eger, Tiszanána). In the area of Pest and Nógrád Counties, the four cemeteries contained graves with vessels from all three social groups.

BURIAL RITES AND GRAVES WITH VESSELS

At the 74 sites under study, 127 graves could be evaluated with respect to burial rites. It has to be noted that 14% of these (18 graves) had been disturbed, 3% (4 graves) had been robbed and in the case of another 13% (16 graves) we have no data available on the issue.

In 33% of the graves with vessels of the region (39 graves) we have no data on the sex of the buried person. In 30% of the cases (37 graves) the vessel was placed beside a child, in 15% (18 graves) beside an adult man, and in 17% (21 graves) an adult woman. In another 2% the sex of the deceased adult was not determined (3 graves), in 2% it was presumably female, while in one case a vessel was placed into a double grave, where probably a man and a woman had been buried together (*Appendix 2: Fig. 2*).

After mapping the data we may see that the region of Heves County can be distinguished in terms of burial rite, since here vessels as grave-goods have been documented mostly in the graves of women and children (although in the case of Besenyőtelek the other grave-goods imply a male burial, which indicates that statistics often show a clear picture only due to the lack of research). The other regions cannot be separated this easily in this regard.

In terms of the position of the vessel in the grave, in 24% of the cases (27 graves) we lack any information on the issue. In 35% (41 cases) the food in the vessel was placed near the head, in 27% (31 cases) near the legs, while in 4% (5 cases) beside the body. In the rest of the cases (10% – 11 graves) another seven placements were attested: in one case near the belly, once above the chest, while positions beside the knee, at the thigh, beside the arm and in the grave fill were each attested twice (*Appendix 2: Fig. 3*). If we compare these with the sex of the deceased, no correlation can be found. We could not find regional differences in ritual within the study area, and the position of the vessel in the grave is not uniform even in one cemetery (see e.g. the case of Ibrány-Esbróhalom, Karos-Eperjesszög II or Szob-Kiserdő). Although at Tiszabura and to the south there are six

cemeteries (Tiszabura, Tiszaroff, Törökszentmiklós, Szolnok-Ugar, Zagyvarékas and Monor), where – except for a single case – the vessel was always placed beside the head, this observation cannot be generalized yet. S. Tettemanti's statement, according to which north and west of the Danube vessels were placed at the feet of the deceased, while in the Upper Tisza region, the northern Great Hungarian Plain and in the Danube–Tisza interfluve vessels found near the head (Tettemanti 1975, 104) and the shoulders dominate, has to be modified in the light of new data.

With regard to other elements of the burial rite, in 40% of the cases (49 graves) simple extended inhumation was observed, while in 23% of the cases (28 graves) we do not have any information on the issue. In 10% of the cases (12 graves) horse burial was also attested, while in 13% (16 cases) one or both arms were bent. The remaining 14% (another 17 graves) belong to 13 other types: once the legs of the deceased were pulled up; in one case, the deceased was buried in a chambered tomb; in another coffin grave both arms were bent; one double grave has been documented as well; one grave was encircled with stones; in one case, a dog burial was documented as well in the grave.[16] One grave had a side step and coffin, another a side step and a horse burial; one had a side-wall niche, another was similar but contained a horse burial as well; in two cases the deceased were buried in a coffin, in two other cases trepanation was observable on the skull of the deceased, while in three other cases trepanation and horse burial were both documented in the same grave.

The custom of bending the arms of the deceased is characteristic in certain graves, especially in the Upper Tisza region; we know of two cases in the area between the Hortobágy and Berettyó rivers, it appears in one grave near the Ipoly's mouth and once in Heves County. The custom does not seem to be present in the northern part of the Danube–Tisza interfluve, except for Grave 9 at Visonta. Horse burial is also not characteristic for graves with vessels in the north Hungarian region, except for the grave of Besenyőtelek, although it does appear in other areas. Other provisions of food in the graves – animal bones or eggs – were found in 6% of the cases (7 graves) in the Upper Tisza region and at one site (Szolnok-Ugar) in the Danube–Tisza interfluve.

With regard to the orientation of the graves, in 30% of the cases (36 graves) we do not have any information, while in 57% (69 cases) West-East orientation was observed. In 2% (2 graves) the burial has a Southwest–Northeast orientation, while in 9% (11 graves) a Northwest–Southeast orientation was documented. Only in 2% of the cases (3 graves) was East–West orientation observed, which means that Graves 164, 251 and 255 at Ibrány, excavated by E. Istvánovits, are unique in the area. Another unique phenomenon was observed in Grave 164 at Ibrány: it belongs to that 2% (3 graves) of all cases where not one, but two vessels were placed in the grave (one at the head, the other at the feet) (Istvánovits 2003, 353). This rite appears only in Grave II/32 at Kenézlő-Fazekaszug, where two vessels had been placed on the two sides of the head (Fettich 1931, 88); in connection with the graves excavated in 1937 at Streda nad Bodrogom, in lack of proper documentation it remains questionable whether the jar was found together with the vessel with ribbed neck or as a stray find.[17] In Grave A at Tiszabura-Szőlőskert – where the authenticity of the excavation is doubted – a vessel with ribbed neck and a jar were found on the two sides of the head of the deceased (Horváth 1934, 143). The two latter cases are not entirely securely documented, but had to be mentioned for the sake of completeness.

In connection with the topic I have to mention another phenomenon to which E. Istvánovits has recently drawn our attention (Istvánovits 2003, 353). She interpreted ceramic sherds found in the fill of the grave or around it as an element of the burial ceremony. I could collect nine sites from the area under study where this had been documented (Bodroghalom-Eresztvényhomok, Ibrány-Esbóhalom, Karcsa-Kormoska, Kenézlő-Farkaszug I, Kóspallag-Kishantpatak, Szabolcs-Petőfi utca, Letkés-Téglaégető, Kistokaj-Homokbánya, Szob-Vendelin). Of the 24 burials one yielded a vessel as well (Bodroghalom-Eresztvényhomok, Grave 9). At Karcsa-Kormoska none of the graves contained vessels, but only in the case of one of the three (Grave 26) can we talk about contemporary sherds: the fragments from the fill of Graves 62 and 90 cannot be connected to the period under study. Nevertheless, the examples from Kóspallag, Letkés and Szob indicate that this ritual cannot be connected exclusively to the Upper Tisza region. I also have to note in connection with the fragment from Kóspallag that the half vessel found in Grave 1 and one of the fragments from Grave 3 show such a great similarity that they probably belong to the same vessel. When examining this ritual we have to be cautious with our interpretations, however, since it is quite possible that in many cases the phenomenon was not documented.

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16 It has been suggested that the dog burial belonged to another period (Kovács 1989, 171; Bálint 1971, 303–314).

17 I would like to thank G. Nevizánszky for this information.

DATING GRAVES WITH VESSELS

When dating the cemeteries, I took into account the evaluation of the excavators and the most recent dating proposals of specific object types. 30% of the graves with vessels did not contain any other grave-goods. Of the properly excavated sites with vessels from graves, 69 were accessible for study. In the following I will base my investigations and conclusions on these. It is important to emphasize: there are ca. 94%, that is, 98 10th-century graves belonging to the above mentioned 69 cemeteries. Besides, only 7 graves can be dated to the late 10th century – early 11th century.

The graves of sites with vessels fall into the following periods: 27 sites (40%) can be dated to the first half of the 10th century, and 21 (31%) cemeteries to the first two thirds of the century. The rest 13 cemeteries were dated to the second and/or last third of the 10th century.

From these data it is clear at the first glance that most of the vessels placed in graves in the region represent the 10th-century, a period that is difficult to distinguish from the preceding and following centuries at settlements.

TECHNOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

I am of the opinion that the most thorough possible study of the past methods of pottery manufacture is important both from the point of view of the history of technology and chronology. In lack of pictorial and written sources in the Hungarian Conquest Period and the Early Árpád Period the issue can only be studied through the products themselves. Beside the pottery kilns (VÁGNER 2002) we have no other potters' tools[18] or potters' wheels at our disposal.[19] The technological study of the finds offers a number of possibilities, but also has many elements of uncertainty. In this paper I would like to present the results of the study of 95 intact vessels, which raise a number of questions in connection with ceramic technology as well.

1. MATERIAL GROUPS

With regard to the material of the vessels, as archaeometric studies on the pottery of the period have shown, in most cases we cannot assume intentional levigation and tempering (SIMONYI 2005, 43; SZILÁGYI et al. 2006, 62–63); real tempering and vessels made simply of the clay of secondary clay sources are very difficult to distinguish macroscopically, with the naked eye, consequently I did not attempt this. (This is the reason why I use the term "*sandy clay*" instead of "*sand-tempered*" when describing the vessels.) I could make some fundamental observations on the vessels regarding their material, and distinguished three categories: 1. pebbly, sandy, micaceous, 2. sandy, micaceous, 3. presumably intentionally levigated and tempered.

During my studies I observed a phenomenon on the vessels that has been known in research for a long time (HOLL 1956, 177): it seems that the bases of the vessels always have a more coarse material, than the upper part, as hand-wheeling also affects only the rim of the vessel. Previously E. Simonyi suggested that such a manufacture of the vessels had static reasons (SIMONYI 2001a, 370), while M. Wolf noted that the cause may have been greater fire resistance (WOLF 2003, 87). Since archaeometric studies and their interpretations indicate that we cannot talk about intentional tempering in the period, both of these suggestions seem less convincing at the moment.

2. THROWING

Due to the considerable terminological confusion about throwing pottery in the literature, it seems prudent to briefly review here the meaning of various technological terms. The clarification of the meaning of the three basic categories (handmade, hand-wheeled and "*fast-wheeled*" vessels) became important during the study of the vessels placed in Conquest Period graves. Furthermore, it seemed reasonable to restructure the previous tripartite

[18] As far as I know, there is only one published implement from Hungary (from the Ottoman Period), which can be interpreted as a potter's tool: a clay cutter from the castle of Ozora (GERE 2003, 51–52).

[19] A find of a late medieval potter's kick wheel from Dortmund-Groppenbruch, Germany, is a unique find (BERGMANN 1993, 270–274).

system, and to talk about vessels made by hand, on the potter's wheel or with a mixed technology (*Appendix 2: Fig. 4*).

I. Handmade vessel

All vessels that had been built by hand, without the centrifugal force of the potter's wheel in all phases of the manufacture of the vessel, are considered handmade. These could be manufactured with various techniques, like the coil or spiral technique, slab technique (Orton 1995, 117–120). The lack of bands and stripes, that would otherwise result from the use of the wheel, and the smoothed-over coils or spirals are easy to identify. In the material I studied, representatives of this technological group could not be observed, although it is admittedly difficult to distinguish on the basis of technological traces from vessels that had been wheeled on a tournette subsequently, discussed below.

II. Wheel-made vessel

The basic form is the so-called single wheel (Rye 1981, Fig. 58), with numerous variants.

II/1. "Primitive wheel":[20] During ethnographic research on Crete, Cyprus and in Messenia, Hampe observed a simple turntable (so-called *Handdreh-* und *Fußschubscheibe*) still in use in the 20th century, where hand-built vessels were partly formed on a small wheel, sitting on a low stool in front of the turntable, turning it with the toe or the heel (Hampe–Winter 1962, 93). This type of wheel could achieve only a slow rotation speed (Hampe–Winter 1962, 57). Vessels termed here "*hand-wheeled subsequently*" could have been made on such turntables (Fiedler 1992, 122).

The four vessels in the study area (Karos-Eperjesszög II Grave 1, Hajdúszoboszló-Árkoshalom Grave 189, Ibrány-Esbóhalom Grave 1965, Visznek-Kecskehegy Grave 35; *Fig. 2*) all come from properly excavated and documented graves, thus their date in the period is beyond doubt. They are scattered throughout the study area. With regard to their material and technology, these artefacts in question belong either to the group of I. or to the group II/1. The material of these vessels is the least homogenized, and their decoration has a higher "*amplitude*" (e.g. Visznek, Hajdúszoboszló) or is more irregular (Ibrány) than of those made on a hand-wheel. In all cases it can be assumed that the coils were placed upon each other, smoothed and then wheeled subsequently.

Vessels formed on a tournette in the final phase of the manufacture process, although they make up only a small portion of the material, can be regarded as evidence for the survival of earlier ceramic manufacturing technologies, especially if we think that these four sites include Visznek-Kecskehegy as well, where Grave 35, placed above the Avar Period cemetery, is part of the 10th-century grave group (Révész 2008, 380–381).

II/2. Classic hand-wheel:[21] The hand-wheel consists of two stones and a pivot and a socket, or a wooden plank turning on a pivot. Its form is similar to real potter's wheel, but it is smaller, lighter and lacks a second wheel, consequently it cannot rotate as fast and provide such a centrifugal force as the kick wheel. It has to born in mind, however, that for a shorter period it could reach greater speed (Rice 1987, 134). We can distinguish two basic types: with a fixed pivot (Löbert 1984, Fig. 1.; Ceramica 2007, 181) and with a rotating pivot (Löbert 1984, Fig. 1; Ceramica 2007, 182).

II/2.A group: the forming of a vessel on a hand-wheel built with coil technique; this makes use of the wheel's centrifugal force only in a single phase of the manufacture of the vessel. In connection with the medieval pottery of the Carpathian Basin, the technique was described by I. Holl based on Bosnian ethnographic examples. Traces of turning are clearly visible – especially on the upper part of the vessel, under the rim, both inside and outside – on vessels manufactured with this technique, beside the coil technique and the stamp or plank impression on the base.

II/2.A1 subgroup: traces of turning are visible in the upper part, on the shoulder;

II/2.A2 subgroup: traces are visible on the whole surface of the vessel.[22]

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[20] That is, tornio primitivo, hand-wheel, turntable, pivoted turntable, tour à main, tournette, torneta, torno lento, rueda baja, primitív korong. See Caprio 2007, 176.

[21] Also called tornio a mano, fast wheel, potter's wheel, stick wheel, tour de potier, tour à main, tour au bâton, torno de inerzia, torno de mano, handbetriebene Töpferscheibe, klasszikus kézikorong. See Caprio 2007, 179.

[22] Holl 1956, 185. The latter became possible through the development of the hand-wheel.

The majority of the vessels (91%; *Fig. 3*)[23] belong to subgroup II/2.A2 Here further division would be possible only in terms of quality, although this is a rather subjective criterion. This group is characteristic for the whole study area.

My observations on the technology of hand-wheeled pottery are similar to those of other specialists of the pottery of the period (Parádi 1959; Simonyi 2005). The groove on the rim indicates good technology, but could be observed only on four vessels. The formation of grooves probably depended on the use of a more stable hand-wheel. Although ceramic lids are rare from the period (e.g. Borsod-Edelény: Wolf 2006, 53, 10. kép), a connection between the grooves and the lids cannot be excluded. (In the case of the vessel from Grave 4 at Tiszaeszlár-Újtelep some doubt must be raised regarding the conscious use of grooves, since here ca. two thirds of the inner rim was grooved; this seems to be more accidental than intentional.) The shaping of the profiles of the vessels also indicates good mastery of the craft, just like the cutting of the rim, while the rarely attested carinated rims indicate a good technique and a more stable wheel.

II/2.B group: Depending on the thickness and diameter/weight of the wheel and the size of the vessel (with a larger wheel or a smaller vessel) hand-wheels can be used to throw vessels.[24] Historical representations (Rieth 1939, Figs. 60, 57 and 59) and ethnographic parallels (Hampe–Winter 1962, 94) show that this can be solved with two persons, where one is rotating wheel, the other is building the vessel. The traces of drawing up and cutting are clearly identifiable.

We have to highlight the find from Nagyhegyes, whose archaeological context is unfortunately unknown, but could not be left out of this study because of its firm date in the 10th–11th-centuries. Regarding its technology it represents a transition, and its affiliation with group II/2.B is a possibility. The material of the vessel is much finer than the average 10th–11th-century pot, and seems to have been intentionally silted and tempered. It has a base stamp, the vessel is an extremely symmetrical and traces of horizontal cordons can be seen on the inside at the belly and neck of the vessel (*Fig. 4. 1*). The ridges on the inside of the vessel are not traces of coils, since – as mentioned in connection with the previous group – they are not vertically smoothed, and they are much more regular. The base stamp does not exclude the possibility that it had been thrown, since – as demonstrated above – this could have happened on a hand-wheel as well; at the same time, there will be examples below that fast-wheeled vessels can also have base stamps. Furthermore, it cannot be determined about the technology of the small jar found in Grave 39 at Kálmánháza-Vitézsor whether the intentionally silted and tempered vessel with a base stamp had been hand-wheeled or thrown on a hand-wheel. The find of Kálmánháza belongs

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[23] Ágcsernyő-Nagyréti domb, Biel/Bély, Bodroghalom-Eresztvényhomok, Graves 9, 18, 20, 22, 24 and 25, Streda nad Bodrogom-Bálványhegy/Bodrogszerdahely I, Graves 1 and 7, Edelény-Semmelweis utca, Grave 7, Gáva-Vásártér, Grave 18, Ibrány-Esbóhalom, two vessels from Grave 164, Graves 165, 251 and 255, Kálmánháza-Vitézsor, Grave 39, Karos-Eperjesszög,I, Graves 12 and 13, Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave II/66, Karos-Eperjesszög III, Graves III/16, III/18 and III/19, Kenézlő-Fazekaszug II, two vessels of Grave 32, Graves 33, 37, 38 and 41, Kistokaj-Homokbánya, Grave 59, and two stray finds, Miskolc-Repülőtér, Graves 9, 11, 12 and a stray find, Nagyhalász-Zomborhegy, Grave 1908,B 1 (Jósa's Grave 3), Pap-Balázshegy, stray find, Rad-Cselédhomok, Graves 2, 8, 12 and two stray finds, Sárospatak-Baksatanya, Grave 3, Szabolcs-Petőfi utca, Graves 382, 387 and 389, Tarpa-Nagy-hegy, Tímár-Béke Tsz. majorja I, Graves 15, 16, 24 and a stray find, Tímár-Béke Tsz. majorja II, Grave 4, Tiszabercel-Ráctemető Graves 8 and 9, Tiszabezdéd-Harangláb, Grave 3, Tiszaeszlár-Ujtelep, Grave 4, Tiszatardos-Reviczky uradalom, Berekböszörmény-Pál dombja, Berekböszörmény-Református templom, Grave 1, Debrecen-Józsa, Clara Zetkin utca, Grave 23, Hajdúsámson-Majorsági föld, Hajdúszoboszló-Árkoshalom, Grave 147, Körösszegapáti-Pállapály, Grave 27, Nagyhegyes-Józsa tanya, Sárrétudvari-Hízóföld, Graves 88 and 190, Tiszabura-Szőlőskert dűlő, two vessels from Grave A, Tiszacsege-Rákóczi u. 24, Törökszentmiklós-Szenttamás, Graves 39 and 44, Monori erdő, Grave 4, Szolnok-Ugar (Lenin-Tsz), Graves 4, 5, 10, 14, 18 and 28, Üllő-Hosszúberekpéteri, two vessels from Grave 2, Aldebrő-Mocsáros, Grave 15, Dormánd-Hanyipuszta, Graves 6, 8 and a stray find, Eger-Szépasszonyvölgy, Grave 26 and a stray find, Kóspallag-Kishantapatak, Grave 1, Szob-Kiserdő, Graves 15, 23, 32, 41, 60, 73 and 77, Tiszanána-Csehtanya, Grave 4. Due to lack of space, the description of these vessels is not included here.

[24] Holl 1956, 191: "*Among foreign scholars Kostrzewsky (1925), Jakimowicz (1929), Knorr (1937), Rieth (1938), Holubowicz (1947) and Rybakov (1948) studied in detail the types and development of the hand-wheel. The – mostly ethnographic – material they had collected from the simple light wheel to hand-wheels enhanced with a lower cylinder and later by a cross-plank shows a huge diversity. In my opinion the archaeological material can be connected to these types only at a very general level, and a more detailed categorization is not possible yet. The finds in themselves do not always indicate the implements used, and as Holubowicz emphasizes: most scholars studying the potter's wheel do not know that a vessel can be turned and built on a hand-wheel as well (Holubowicz 1947, 9–10).*" Bosnian ethnographic examples also prove this: Holl 1956, 191, 182, 190, 24. kép d. A parallel from Novi Pazari: a wheel approximately 30 cm in diameter and 30 cm tall: Kolmeta 1954, 167–168, Tab. I–II; Orton 1995,122, Fig. 10. 3; Roux 1990, 31–37, photo 1–9.

to a small group of vessels that have a groove on the inside of the rim, indicating a superior technology or a more masterful craftsman.[25]

It is important to emphasize that the difference between two hand-wheels and the products manufactured on them can be huge. A heavier wheel would obviously turn faster and for a longer time than a smaller and lighter one (Orton 1995, 124).

II/3. "Fast-wheel":[26] We have to note that the term "*fast wheel*", indicating a faster rotation, is used consistently to mean "*kick wheel*" in Hungarian research (Holl 1963, 349). Nevertheless, I think that since this is a debated issue, the term needs further clarification.

A "*fast wheel*" is capable of more or less continuous fast rotation around an axis. The speed, rev and the wheel's stability – the lack of deflection – are the key elements of the innovation. Two types can be distinguished: the so-called "*stick-wheel*" and the (foot-powered) "*kick-wheel*" (Rice 1987, 134). The latter type – in contrast to the previous ones – belongs already to the category of "*double wheel*" (Rye 1981, 74, Fig. 58). The velocity needed to pull up a vessel is 50 to 150 rotations per minute; it is inversely proportional with the diameter of the vessel. Thus, the building of the neck of a flask needs high speed, perhaps even 150 rotations per minute, while 50 rotations per minute or even less is enough to build the wall of a large vessel (Rye 1981, 74).

Thus, due to the new possibilities, clay was always thrown on this type of wheel, and then the complete vessel is cut off the wheel. The traces of this are easily identifiable, and it is also indicated by the symmetry of the product and the regularity of the decoration. (*Fig. 5*)

Another indirect evidence for pulling up vessels is the smooth, slipped surface: dry clay cannot be pulled up, and due to the centrifugal force, water leaves faster which leads to the overdrying of the vessel. It would also scour the potter's hand (Rice 1987, 128–129).

We have to draw attention to the misunderstanding according to which since a vessel manufactured on the fast wheel has to be cut off from the wheel, it cannot have a base stamp. This is not always the case, as demonstrated by a flask from Szokolya, now in the Hungarian National Museum,[27] or a base fragment from Sopron.[28] The vessel and the fragment had beyond any doubt been manufactured on a fast wheel (the traces of pulling up are visible on the inside of the neck, while the concentric circles left by wheeling are visible on the bottom), but still have a base stamp.

Among the grave vessels under study, three cases had been undoubtedly pulled up on the wheel, the significance of which will be investigated in more detail in the section "*Technological conclusions*". These finds, due to the above-described reasons, cannot be unequivocally assigned to either group II/2.B or II/3. We have to note that even in the case of the unique amphora of Sóshartyán, so far undoubtedly defined as fast-wheeled, there are no traces of cutting off the vessel.

II/4. "Mixed technology"– thrown neck and hand-wheeled body: In the archaeological material the use of more than one technology on a single vessel has been attested numerous times (Orton 1995, 125; Lüdtke–Schietzel 2001, 976). This group is represented in my collection only by one vessel from Biel/Bély (*Fig. 4. 2*). The cylindrical ribbed neck had been thrown on a wheel (of unknown kind), and then attached to the body of the vessel built on the generally used hand-wheel. The two parts, one made of coils and then subsequently smoothed and the other, the neck, with the characteristic corrugations caused by pulling up on a fast-wheel, are clearly distinguishable. The vessel from Biel – about whose context we only know that it was a burial with a horse, but which is a typical vessel form of the period – displays clearly the traces of pulling up and the attachment of the two parts.[29] Beyond this, in a strict sense, we can assign to this group vessels with hand-wheeled body and unwheeled handle, e.g. from Hajdúsámson-Majorsági föld, Ágcsernyő-Nagyrétidomb, Tarpa and Tiszaeszlár-Újtelep.

Technological variability (*Fig. 4*), however, is not an exclusive feature of this region in the period under study. Preliminary data indicate that e.g. the cemetery of Rusovce/Oroszvár yielded two vessels with subsequent wheeling,[30] although we have to mention that the complete lack of handmade vessels in the later Árpád Period is not completely proven

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25 Bálint 1991, 48–51. Cs. Bálint suggested in connection with the material of the settlement of Eperjes that grooves for lids – thus the lids and, consequently, a new cooking technique – could have spread due to Byzantine influence.

26 Tornio a piede, kick-wheel, spindle-wheel, fly-wheel, foot-wheel, double-wheel, tour à volant, tour à pied, torno rápido, rueda de alfarero, fuβbetriebene Töpferscheibe, gyorskorong. See Ceramica 2007, 188.

27 Szokolya, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County. Inv. nr. 75/1933. MNM.

28 Sopron, Templom u. 20., in the material of the burnt rampart (Gömöri 2002, 67).

29 The separate manufacture and subsequent attachment of the cylindrical neck and the body of the vessel was pointed out by N. Parádi to K. Mesterházy (Mesterházy 1975, 102).

30 58.804.HM, 58.821.H., see Note 2.

either, as indicated above in connection with the baking bell of Békés-Ditér[31].

Furthermore, we have to expect the presence of wheel-thrown pottery in other regions as well: traces of pulling up can be seen on the rim and neck fragments of a vessel with ribbed neck from the fill of Feature II/19 at Fertőszentmiklós-Szereti dűlő and on a neck fragment with cog-wheel pattern among the ceramic finds of House 8 (GÖMÖRI 2002).[32] At the same time, in my opinion, traces of pulling up and cutting are visible on the churning vessel from Borsod-Edelény, just like on a jar unearthed at the 10th-century settlement of Sopron-Jereván (GÖMÖRI 2002, 150, Fig. 116). A wonderful example of Late Árpád Period finds is the fast-wheeled clay cauldron rim from Győr-Káptalandomb,[33] and a Late Árpád Period jar from Győr-Homokgödrök (TAKÁCS 1996, 176, Fig. 18: a Late Árpád Period variant of Type 1).

3. SURFACE TREATMENT

It can be observed in the settlement material of the period that the surface of the vessels was smoothed with wet hand or a wet piece of cloth, whose trace (a thin clay slip that peels off easily) is usually clearly visible. Scientific analyses, however, did not demonstrate the presence of a separate layer, thus this is not an engobe administered after drying (SIMONYI 2005, 46–47). Among the vessels from graves such a clay slip on the surface of the vessel appears rather on carefully smoothed pots, like the one from Nagyhegyes.

The only vessel with a polished surface dated with certainty to the period is known from Karos (*Fig. 15. 1*; TAKÁCS 2000, 9). According to M. Takács, the presence of polished pottery can be demonstrated in all three phases of the 10th–14th-century ceramic material of the Little Hungarian Plain, although only in very small proportions. It has to be noted that the polished vessels of the Little Hungarian Plain are in no way connected to the polished vessels of the Saltovo-Mayatskaya or the Balkan-Danubian cultural complexes. He concludes, that it could be the evidence of the survival of a 9th-century technique in southern Transdanubia (TAKÁCS 2000, 33).

4. FIRING

During the macroscopic investigation of the vessels it could be established that most of them had probably been fired simply in a pit, neutrally;[34] the use of the potter's kiln can be assumed only in connection with one or two vessels with good quality tempering and even colour (Nagyhegyes: *Fig. 4. 1*, Kálmánháza: *Fig. 18. 1*).

I made some observations in connection with secondary burning as well. It is frequent that the vessel is burnt around the rim, which may simply be the trace of the food that had boiled in it. Generally, the body of the vessels is sooty to a certain extent, but – in a non-negligible number of cases – while the wall of the vessel shows obvious traces of secondary burning, the bottom of the vessel is the least sooty (e.g. Aldebrő, Visznek, Karos, Bodroghalom). This does not mean that the bottom of these vessels was not exposed to heat, only that what we see is not the burnt layer (soot), but a livelier colour due to repeated heating.

TECHNOLOGICAL CONCLUSIONS

From the point of view of research, the clarification of terminology is important, since on a small, but not insignificant, part of 10th–11th-century ceramic material the traces of pulling up are clearly visible. The question, whether the kick-wheel – indispensable for mass production – was already in use, leads us further away. It seems certain that the technology was not really widespread until the 15th century (HOLL 1963, 349), although based on the finds it cannot yet be decided whether they had been thrown on a single wheel or a double wheel. Even if the first is the case, we are facing a

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31 N. Parádi, Békés-Ditér, excavation documentation, Archives of the MNM Nr. 2000.VI./36 (82.1.1.B.MNM, 82.1.4.B).

32 GÖMÖRI 2002, 170–171, 174, Fig. 138. I would like to thank I. Holl for confirming the technology of the fragment with cog-wheel pattern.

33 Győr-Káptalandomb, Trench 1974.1, -150–180 cm. I would like to thank P. Tomka for allowing me the analysis of the material.

34 In a pit they are fired at a temperature of 700 degrees the most, and become spotty (KARDOS 1978, 49). Vessels with neutral firing are taken here to mean types that are spotty, thus a single vessel had been fired under both oxidizing and reducing conditions. I would like to thank P. Véninger for helping clarify the issue.

significant technological innovation that cannot be ignored. I list here four possible explanations of the phenomenon, taking into account the interpretative limitations of ceramics.

1. The vessels in question are all imports.
2. It is a survival of a technology present in previous centuries as well.
3. Technology transfer is behind the phenomenon whose source needs to be identified.
4. The technology is the result of an autochthonous development in the 10th-century Carpathian Basin.

Three finds among the vessels from graves can be assigned to the first group with certainty (an amphora from Grave 3 at Sóshartyán-Murahegy (*Fig. 26*), a one-handled jug from Grave 66 at Karos-Eperjesszög, cemetery II. (*Fig. 15. 1*), and a handle-less vessel with ribbed neck from Grave 12 at Miskolc-Repülőtér (*Fig. 16. 5*), while the context of the fourth (a small pot from Grave A at Tiszabura-Szőlőskert dűlő) remains uncertain.[35] The sites are geographically scattered, and the available meagre data do not indicate that these were the products of a single workshop.

The technology of the unique amphora from Sóshartyán is special: it is a glazed vessel manufactured on a fast-wheel, probably an import. Its symmetry, material and execution clearly distinguish it from the other vessel made on a simple hand-wheel. Nevertheless, if we investigate the base of the vessel, that is, the bottom of the base ring, it is obvious that the vessel was not cut off, but simply lifted from the wheel. Manufacturing on a fast-wheel is not necessarily a surprise, given its probable Balkan origin. The first possibility can be ruled out in connection with the vessel from Miskolc, since in this period trade in pottery has not been attested yet in the region. Furthermore, its texture is not really different from that of the usual Árpád Period pottery. However, since no material analysis has yet been carried out on the vessel, its origin remains undetermined. Regarding the provenience of the jug from Karos, the results of the scientific analyses have not been published. The function of the vessel remains unclear, in lack of any analogies it cannot be determined whether it had been used for storage or not. The function and foreign origin of the amphora from Sóshartyán is obvious, and even if the technology of wheeling does not exclude the possibility of local origin, as mentioned above, the vessel form and the glaze clearly show connections beyond the 10th–11th-century material culture of the Carpathian Basin. When discussing this find, K. Mesterházy mentioned as analogies only amphorae from northern Bulgaria (Shumen, Pliska, Galishche, Preslav), but he drew attention to the higher quality of the vessel from Sóshartyán (even glaze), based on which he suggested that the vessel was of Byzantine origin (Mesterházy 1991, 168). According M. Takács, based on its size and shape it is a Bulgarian product, and no proper Byzantine analogy has yet been found (Takács 1997, 212). If we have a look at contemporary Byzantine pottery, a direct Byzantine origin can be excluded: on the one hand, no proper formal analogy can be found among 10th-century Byzantine amphorae (Günsenin 1990, 20–46); one the other, the quality and material of the glaze of Middle Byzantine glazed vessels is very different from that of the Sóshartyán vessel.[36] An exact analogy cannot be found among the contemporary amphoroid vessels of the Balkans either (Дончева-Петкова 1977, 82–84; Fiedler 1992, 147, Taf. 31; Comşa 1980, 323), neither in terms of vessel form, nor decoration, although they are certainly closer to the exemplar from the Carpathian Basin than the Byzantine sherds. Thus, the object is presumably of Balkan origin, although in lack of exact analogies this cannot yet be proven.

Among the possible answers, the survival of the fast-wheel technology of the Late Avar Period and the 9th-century also has to be taken into consideration. The so-called yellow ware of the Late Avar Period was manufactured on the fast wheel (Garam 1969, 232). Fast-wheeled pottery is attested sporadically in Late Avar Period settlements as well, e.g. at Gyoma, Site 133 (Vida 1996, 329–330) or at Eperjes-Csikós tábla (Bálint 1991, 23, Taf. XVII. 9, 13). A few Mediterranean type flasks with polished surface are known from the Late Avar Period cemeteries of the Tisza–Maros region, e.g. from Graves 9, 12 and 14 at Pusztamérges (Korek 1945, 110–111, Table VII. 21, Table VIII. 15) and Szeged-Kundomb (Meier-Arendt 1985, 44, Abb. 35). Several fast-wheeled

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35 Due to the low quality of the documentation of the excavation, the vessel could not be entered into the catalogue and no conclusions will be drawn from it directly. It seems that some mix-up occurred in connection with the vessels, as two pots can be found under the same inventory number: one can be surely dated to the early Árpád Period, the other is the published cooking pot manufactured on the fast wheel.

36 Based on the 10th–11th-century glazed vessels seen at the temporary exhibition of the Istanbul Museum ("*Gün Işiğinda, Istanbul' un 8000 yili, Marmaray, Metro, Sultanahmet kazilari*") and the glazed fragments (stray finds and survey finds from Istanbul, etc.) in the collection of the BIAA. I would like to express my gratitude to Lutgarde Vanderput (British Institute of Archaeology, Ankara) for providing access to the Middle Byzantine ceramic material in the collection.

vessels can also be detected in the 8th–10th-century ceramic material of northwest Romania, e.g. the amphora from Ghenci-Lutărie (Hung. Gencs) or the finds from Lazuri de Beiuş (Hung. Belényesirtás) (STANCUI 2000, 179–181). The technological diversity of the ceramic material found around the 9th-century potter's kilns (Features 296 and 297) was considered representative by the excavators (TAKÁCS–VADAY 2004, 21): beside hand-wheeled vessels, vessels wheeled subsequently and handmade pottery it contained, although only small proportions (four fragments), fast-wheeled ceramics as well (TAKÁCS–VADAY 2004, 32). This shows that the technology was present not only in the Late Avar Period, but in the 9th-century as well, which may shed new light on 10th-century ceramic technology as well. Thus, the possibility cannot be excluded that a ceramic manufacturing method, present before the Hungarian Conquest, survived into the 10th–11th-centuries.

In connection with the vessel with ribbed neck from Miskolc-Repülőtér, a methodological problem has to be raised. Even in such a small region within the Carpathian Basin, we cannot find two vessels with a cylindrical neck that would be each other's exact analogies. There are nine hand-wheeled and one fast-wheeled vessels in the north-eastern area (*Fig. 10*). Thus, a clear-cut definition has not yet been provided for the type, and the only common feature of the group is the cylindrical, ribbed neck. Consequently, when we are looking for the formal analogies, we find such a huge spatial and temporal distribution that the method itself has to be questioned. As a consequence, researchers practically found parallels wherever they looked for (MESTERHÁZY 1975; FODOR 1985; JANKOVICH 1994, 408–409; TAKÁCS 1997, 213; BÁLINT 2004, 39). This vessel form appears in Moldavia as well: a fast-wheeled vessel with a ribbed neck dated to the 6th–7th-centuries was published from Militari (COMŞA 1972, 10, Fig. 1. 5), but it is also known from the 10th–12th-centuries (ХЫНКУ–РАФАЛОВИЧ 1973, 169, рис. 5. 11). 6th–7th-century vessels with ribbed neck and handle are known from Merovingian row cemeteries in southern Germany as well, e.g. from Dittenheim (HAAS-GEBHARD 1998, 76).

In connection with the technology of the vessel with ribbed neck from Miskolc-Repülőtér, I would like to take into consideration the possibility of technology transfer and review of the use of the fast wheel in various areas. In Byzantium, the use of the fast wheel was a widespread ceramic technology thanks to the survival of traditions from antiquity. The survival of this tradition can be observed in the wider Mediterranean region. According to U. Fiedler's research along the Lower Danube, the use of the fast wheel makes its appearance in the second half of the 9th-century, and some of the amphora-like vessels were already made with the new technology (FIEDLER 1992, 124). Fast-wheeled vessels are present, but only sporadically in Proto-Bulgar pottery (DONČEVA-PETKOVA 1990, 83–85, 89). Based on the material of a few sites we can expect fast-wheeled vessels in the 8th–10th-centuries in the area of the so-called Dridu culture/Balkan-Danubian culture as well (DONČEVA-PETKOVA 1990, 83–85, 89), and it is known from the southern part of the Crimea as well (BARANOV 1990, 35) The survival into the Middle Ages of the ceramic manufacturing tradition of antiquity can be observed not only in the Mediterranean area: for example, Roman ceramic traditions continue into the classic and late Middle Ages in the Rhine region, and different technologies are used beside each other, even in the same workshop (LÜDTKE–SCHIETZEL 2001, 98–99).

Ethnoarchaeological studies have investigated the process of technological changes, its causes and necessary elements. The phenomenon is governed by very complex social, economic, technological and cultural factors. The effectiveness of technology transfer depends on the intensity of the connection. Four basic types of connections were distinguished, of which in our case the first (indirect connection through a mediator) and the second (direct, casual contact) seem relevant (GELBERT 2001, 84–87). Thus, according to the third explanation, the technological innovation could have, in principle, arrived from these areas as well, either directly through the hands of craftsmen from these regions, or indirectly, through them as mediators.

The fourth explanation of the phenomenon would be the regional, autochthonous development of pottery manufacture, the possibility of which cannot be ignored.

Classification

Below I will provide a list of vessel forms, rim types, decorative motifs and base stamps that could be distinguished.

Vessel types

It is not my intention to determine exactly the function of the vessels, as it is not really relevant for my work. (Although the position of the rim and the function of the vessel are correlated to the extent that the more vertical the rim, the easier it is to drink from the vessel.) During classification, I avoided terms like "*table ware*", "*storage vessel*" or "*cooking vessel*", since these would be rather *subjective in the case of these finds.* Of all the finds I categorized, 82 vessels definitely date to the period under study.

Most of the material that I investigated is made up of jars (a main type distributed in the whole study area), which can be divided into groups based on the ratio of their height and largest width:

Type I: Jars

Subtype I/1: jars with wide mouth (6 vessels, *Fig. 6*) – Those vessels belong to this type on which the width of the rim is at least twice as much as the base diameter. Exemplars from this group are known only from the Upper Tisza region.

Subtype I/2: globular jars (14 vessels, *Fig. 7*) – The main feature of the vessels of the type is that the ratio of their height and their largest width is not more than one, that is, their width is larger than their height, their shape is globular or compressed globular. The type is attested in three areas: the Upper Tisza region, Heves County and the Ipoly mouth.

Subtype I/3: normal jars (34 vessels, *Fig. 8*) – The ratio of the height and largest width of vessels of Type I/3 is between 1 and 1.2, thus they are a bit more elongated than Type I/2. The distribution of the finds does not reveal any distinct spatial pattern, it is generally characteristic for the whole study region.

Subtype I/4: elongated jars (13 vessels, *Fig. 9*) – Vessels with a height/width ratio larger than 1.2 are assigned to this type. The distribution area of the type does not show any distinct spatial patterning. Beside jars we have four other major types: bowls, vessels with cylindrical neck, one amphora and one jug.

Type II: Bowls (Fig. 6)

Subtype II/1: flower pot shaped bowl (one vessel)

Subtype II/2: bowl with inverted rim (one vessel)

Type III: Vessels with cylindrical neck (Fig. 10)

Subtype III/1: Vessel with ribbed neck and handles (four vessels) – Vessels with cylindrical, ribbed neck and two handles on the shoulder are assigned to this type. Three of these vessels were found in the Upper Tisza region, one east of the Tisza River.

Subtype III/2: Vessels with ribbed neck without handles (five vessels) – Vessels with ribbed neck without handles belong to this type. Three of these vessels were found in the Upper Tisza region, two east of the Tisza and one at the Ipoly mouth.

Subtype III/3: Vessels with non-ribbed neck and with handles (two vessels) – Vessels with non-ribbed cylindrical neck and two handles on the shoulder belong to this category. Both known vessels were found in the Upper Tisza region.

Type IV: Amphora (one vessel, Fig. 26) – Two handled jar with a straight bottom.

Type V: One-handled jar (one vessel, Fig. 15.1.) – One-handled jar with narrow neck and globular lower part.

When we examine the distribution maps of the various types, no distinct patterns can be recognized. Only Type I/a seems to be an exception, but it needs to be investigated whether the different distribution area is caused by the low number of cases or we can really talk of a spatially distinct group.

The classification of rim types

Four main types and 22 subtypes can be distinguished based on the shape of the rim (see *Fig. 11*).

If we look at the distribution maps of the various rim types (rounded, cut, tapering, carinated), the following conclusions can be drawn: Rounded rims are widespread throughout the study area (35.5% – 32 rims); this is the only known type in the northern part of Hajdú-Bihar County (Kálmánháza-Vitézsor, Debrecen-Józsa, Clara Zetkin utca, Hajdúsámson-Majorsági föld, Hajdúszoboszló-Árkoshalom, Nagyhegyes-Jónatanya), while in the southern part (Sárrétudvari-Hízóföld, Berekböszörmény-Pál

dombja, Berekböszörmény-Református templom) only cut rims have been found. Cut rims are frequent throughout the study area (45% of the rims that could be examined, 39 rims); it remains a question, however, whether this distinction within Hajdú-Bihar County is caused by the inadequacies of research or they reflect different potting methods. According to the available data, carinated rims (11% – 10 rims) are characteristic for the vessels of the Upper Tisza region (Tiszabezdéd-Harangláb, Karos-Eperjesszög II, Ibrány-Esbóhalom, Tiszabercel-Rác-temető, Tiszaeszlár-Újtelep, Kistokaj-Homokbánya), and are attested at one site in Heves County (Dormánd-Hanyipuszta). Tapering rims (three specimens) represent such a small proportion of the material that their distribution cannot tell us much. Grooves are also present in such a small ratio that drawing any conclusions based on them would be irresponsible; they may only indicate the level of technology.

DECORATION

The vessels from graves display the same decorative motifs that had already been discussed in connection with the chronological problems. Two motifs form exceptions: the cog wheel pattern and the, rather rare, simple garland. The latter is so rare that it can be considered a regional feature, but chronological inferences cannot be based on it.

Based on the available information the following groups can be distinguished among the combinations of the given decorative motifs:

I. undecorated
II. wavy lines on the shoulder. a.) running around; b.) incised spirally
III. a.) wavy line bundle; b.) wavy line bundle with a straight line bundle underneath; c.) combination of wavy line bundle – line bundle – wavy line bundle
IV. scroll on the shoulder, in the middle, on the whole vessel, incised densely
V. a.) nail impression; b.) nail impression and scroll
VI. a.) stabbed impressions – wavy line bundle – scroll; b.) stabbed impressions – scroll
VII. a.) wavy line – scroll; b.) two wavy lines – scroll; c.) four wavy lines – scroll
VIII. scroll – wavy line bundle – scroll
IX. nail impression on the inside of the rim – on the side – in a scroll down to the bottom of the vessel
X. bands made up of wavy line bundles.

Based on the decoration of the vessels I investigated or identified from drawings, the above variants could be distinguished. According to these data, 23% of all vessels were decorated with a wavy line bundle and/or line bundle.

This decoration, defined by research as a surviving element, is documented in the Upper Tisza region (*Figs. 14. 4, 18. 4, 19. 2–3, 7*) and in Heves County (*Figs. 24. 2, 7, 25. 1*). One vessel from Monor also has a wavy line bundle. Wavy line bundle is attested only once on the vessels from the area between the Hortobágy and Berettyó rivers (the above delineated "*group with rounded rim*" is also located in this area). Except for the Heves County region, this surviving element is not characteristic for the vessels of northern Hungary. When we examine the frequency of the incised scroll (30%) and the combination of scroll and wavy line, is seems to be present in every region (for instance *Figs. 13. 4, 14. 2–3, 7*). It is remarkable, however, that the separate use of the wavy line is characteristic only in the Upper Tisza region (for example: *Figs. 14. 6, 15. 3*) and east of the Tisza (*Fig. 23. 2*). Among the vessels I collected, only one exemplar from Eger-Szépasszonyvölgy is outside this area. We cannot draw any conclusions from the distribution of the small amount of stabbed impressions (2%, *Figs. 20. 2, 24. 5*) and nail impressions (4%, *Figs. 22. 1, 18. 1, 24. 6*), but it seems that stabbed impressions are characteristic only for vessels from the Upper Tisza and Heves County regions. With regard to decoration we have to note that the Bodrogköz area of the Upper Tisza region shows the largest diversity, but all decorative motifs (wavy line bundle, line bundle, scroll, wavy line, stabbed impression and nail impression) can be found on ten vessels from Heves County as well.

Based on the study of rim types and decoration, there seems to be a similarity between the sites of the Upper Tisza region (*Figs. 13–22*) and Heves County (*Figs. 24. 1–2, 4–5, 7, 25. 1–2*). The abovementioned "*group with rounded rim*" in Hajdú-Bihar County (*Figs. 23, 24. 1*). can be separated from these. The ceramic manufacture of northern Hungary (*Figs. 25. 3–6*) also seems to be different from that of the Upper Tisza region and Heves County, while the least information is available from sites in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County in the Danube–Tisza interfluve (*Fig. 23. 4*) and in the southern part of Pest County due to the small number of finds. If the conclusions are correct, the question rises whether the cause is different workshop traditions or chronological differences.

The investigation of the position of the decoration brought the following results: decoration is present on the upper part of 17% of all decorated

vessels, in the upper third in 18%, in the upper two thirds in 18%, in the upper three quarters in 11%, in the upper four fifth in 17%. Decoration was present in the upper quarter in 2%, in the middle half in 9% and in the mid-third in 8%. This can be basically compared with the tendency demonstrated by E. Simonyi in settlement materials, according to which 10th–11th-century vessels were usually decorated in their upper two third; she considered frequent incised single wavy lines on the shoulder of the vessel, nail impressions or, more rarely, dot-like impressions, under which densely incised scrolls run down to the lower third of the vessel (Simonyi 2005, 48). The cog-wheel pattern seems to be widespread from the 11th-century (Takács 1996a, 340) probably from the second half of the century, based on the vessels from graves in the study region, where this kind of decoration does not occur.

Typology of base stamps

In the study region we known the most about the base stamps of Borsod-Edelény in the 10th-century (Wolf 2006, 53–54; Wolf 2009, 34), although they are generally present on some of the vessels throughout the Árpád Period. It seems that their distributions reflect some regional characteristics: compared to other regions, their number in Northern-Hungary seems to be rather high, while they are almost completely absent from the 10th–11th-century ceramic material of Veszprém County (Takács 1996b, 335), and they are also quite rare in the southern Little Hungarian Plain (Takács 1993, 217). About one third of the vessels from graves in the study area had a base stamp or some kind of a trace of it (blurred stamp or impression of a plank or an axle).

The distribution of the types only shows that – due to the law of large numbers – the diversity of the base stamps from the Upper Tisza region is the highest, thus in theory they can be connected to all the other three regions. The finds from northern Hungary all belong to a single type (encircled cross).

Chronology

We have to emphasize that since chronology is based on the dating of graves with vessels, the results cannot affect ceramic chronology generally, especially not in the whole Carpathian Basin. We do hope, however, that it may provide a guideline for further research. So far only four graves with vessels have been dated by a coin,[37] as indicated already above; in the rest of the cases we have to rely on the chronology of the associated finds and the various phases of the given cemeteries. This is an attempt to sketch the temporal tendencies observed among the vessels from graves in the study region, but it is by no means suggested that it will be possible to date an archaeological feature through pottery as precisely as the third or quarter of a century (*Fig. 12*).[38]

In the following I will review the 78 datable vessels from authentically excavated graves available for study, arranged into chronological groups based on the cemeteries or excavated parts of cemeteries.

Regarding their typology, among the 25 vessels datable to the first half of the 10th-century, all four jar types are attested; the jug from Karos and the vessel with cylindrical neck from Streda nad Bodrogom can also be assigned here. In terms of technology, the group contains vessels formed on a tournette (Karos II Grave 1, Hajdúszoboszló-Árkoshalom Grave 189), one fast-wheeled and 22 hand-wheeled vessels. Seven vessels are decorated by scrolls and scrolls in bands, five by the combination of wavy line and scroll, three by wavy line, three by wavy line and line bundle. 29% (seven exemplars) of the vessels dated to the first half of the 10th century are undecorated. In 13 cases the upper half of the vessel is decorated, in three cases the upper two thirds, in one case almost the whole surface of the vessel is decorated, and in one case the decoration is in the middle half.

The vessels of the group dated to the first two thirds of the 10th-century are all hand-wheeled. The 14 jars in the group represent all four jar types;

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37 Karos-Eperjesszög II Grave 1, Kenézlő-Fazekaszug II Grave 37, Tiszanána-Csehtanya, Grave 4, Tiszasüly-Éhhalom, Szob-Kiserdő, Grave 60.

38 I would like to thank here my supervisor, T. Vida, and I. Feld for their suggestions regarding the chronological chart and an earlier version of the text.

furthermore, the group contains a handled vessel with ribbed neck and a handled jar. The vessels are decorated with wavy line bundles and line bundles in five cases, with scrolls on two vessels, and the combination of wavy line and scroll on two vessels. Five vessels remain undecorated. In three cases the decoration is positioned in the upper half of the vessel, in five cases in the upper two thirds, while in two cases in the upper three quarters.

Within the group dated to the second and last third of the 10th-century, consisting of an unhandled vessel with ribbed neck and ten jars representing all four jar types, ten vessels were hand-wheeled, while one was wheeled subsequently on a tournette. Two vessels are undecorated, two vessels are decorated with wavy line bundle and line bundle, four with wavy line and scroll, and four with scroll. In three cases the decoration is located in the upper half, in four cases in the upper two third, while in three cases in the upper three quarter of the vessel.

Only two vessels from the study area can be assigned with certainty to the group dated to the last third of the 10th-century. Both are hand-wheeled and represent jar Types 2 and 3. One is decorated with wavy line and scroll on its whole surface, while the other has nail impressions and scroll on its upper half.

Vessels that cannot be dated more precisely within the 10th-century include four jars from Type 2, one from Type 4 a bowl and a handled vessel with ribbed neck. The bowl is undecorated, two vessels are decorated with wavy lines, two vessels with wavy line bundle and line bundle, one with wavy line and densely incised lines, and one with scrolls in a band. In two cases the decoration is located in the upper half of the vessel, in one case in the upper two third, while in three cases in the upper four fifth of the vessel.

Vessels dated to the end of the 10th or the beginning of the 11th-century are represented by nine jars (Types 1–3), a bowl with inverted rim, a vessel with ribbed neck and the amphora. In four cases they are decorated with scrolls, in six cases with the combination of wavy line and scroll, and in one case with the combination of stabbed impressions and scroll. In seven cases the decoration appears in the upper half of the vessel, in one case in the middle, in two cases in the upper two third, and in one case in the upper four fifth.

Vessels dated to the mid-11th-century are represented only by three vessels from Szob-Kiserdő, of which only the bowl with inverted rim is intact. Their decoration includes the combination of wavy line and scroll, and scroll on its own.

VESSEL TYPOLOGY, DECORATION TYPOLOGY AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE LIGHT OF CHRONOLOGY

Since the groups are not represented by a large number of vessels, the finds of even one newly excavated cemetery can easily transform the results that can be reached at this moment. Nevertheless, it may still be useful to draw some conclusions.

The four main types identified are present among the vessels dated to the first half, the first two thirds and the second and third thirds of the 10th century. Type 4, jars with elongated body, are not attested among the nine jars dated to the end of the 10th, beginning of the 11th century. Of course, this tendency – the disappearance of the elongated type from the four jar types characteristic for the 10th-century by the turn of the millennium cannot – be generalized based on these data alone. Datable vessels with cylindrical neck and handle are represented by two exemplars altogether (Streda nad Bodrogom-Bálványhegy, Grave 1 [*Fig. 16. 2*] and Tiszaeszlár-Újtelep, Grave 4 [*Fig. 22.4*]); both can be dated to the first half or first two thirds of the 10th century. The two exemplars with ribbed neck from Hajdúsámson (*Fig. 23. 6*) and Tarpa (*Fig. 21. 2*) can be placed to the first two thirds of the 10th-century and generally to the 10th-century. Their handleless variant is also represented by two datable finds: from Tiszabura (*Fig. 23. 4*), where the cemetery can be dated before the end of the 10th-century, and from Miskolc-Repülőtér (*Fig. 16. 5*), dated to the end of the 10th, beginning of the 11th-century. We cannot regard the chronological position of these four vessels as a tendency, and further finds are needed to confirm whether the two variants can really be differentiated chronologically. Due to the rarity of the jug, the amphora and the two bowl types we cannot draw any general conclusions from the collected data.

With regard to the decoration of the vessels we can establish that wavy line bundle and line bundle is attested only on two vessels in the group dated to the first half of the 10th-century, while it is present on 31% of the vessels dated to the first two thirds of the century. The decoration survived into the last two thirds of the century as attested by three vessels. Among the other six 10th-century vessels two jars are also characterized by this feature. The scroll is attested throughout the century and also on seven vessels dated to the end of the 10th and beginning of the 11th-century. The combination of wavy line and

scroll is also present throughout the 10th-century. Wavy line on its own is one of the rarest decorative motifs; it is attested on three jars from the first half of the 10th-century and on three vessels dated to the 10th-century; otherwise it is absent. Stabbed impressions and nail impression are too rare to base any conclusions on. It is striking that in the 10th-century 25–30% of the vessels lacked any decoration, while from the end of the 10th-century undecorated vessels disappear from the study area. With regard to the place of decoration, in the 10th–11th-century the upper half or upper two thirds of the vessels are decorated, but in about 10% of all cases the decoration covers two thirds or almost the entire surface of the vessel.

In connection with the manufacturing technology of the vessels we can establish that in the groups dated to the 10th-century thrown, hand-wheeled and subsequently wheeled vessels are all present; from the end of the 10th-century, vessels made on a tournette are not attested in the studied group. (The vessels manufactured with mixed technology and on the hand-wheel cannot be dated properly due to the insecurities of their archaeological contexts.)

As seen above, we have less information on vessels from graves from the 11th century on, since only 4% of the available vessels can be dated to this period.

Vessels from graves in the light of settlement ceramics

One of the main aims of this research is to find the common denominator between the burial and settlement pottery of the period. It is my suggestion that intact or reconstructible vessels from close contexts – in possession of the appropriate amount of information – can provide a control for the much more fragmentary settlement material.

I would like to mention two well-dated, 10th-century settlement ceramic materials from the region that I was able to examine in person.

Szikszó-Vadász patak is probably a special settlement type, where two intact vessels had – presumably – been deposited as markers of territorial boundaries, which I could examine in person.[39] M. Wolf interpreted the assemblage as boundary markers contemporary with the graves, and places them based on their context to the 10th-century (Wolf 1993, 545–548). Regarding their decoration, the vessels under study do not differ from some of the 10th–11th-century vessels from graves, although I have to mention that among these vessels only one of the jars had decoration on the inside of its rim. The internal decoration of the vessel from Grave 44 at Törökszentmiklós-Szenttamás is unique in another sense as well: instead of a wavy line bundle, it has nail impressions with large arcs on the inside of the rim, for which no analogies could be found yet.

The ceramic material of Borsod-Edelény contains jars with archaic, 10th-century form and decoration (the excavator believes to have found parallels in the pottery of the 10th-century settlements of Esztergom and Örménykút, and the decorative motif of wavy line bundles can certainly be dated to the 10th-century), and the excavator also suggested that strong Saltovo influence could also be observed: a pithos would suggest this. According to M. Wolf's research, the published pottery and stratigraphy[40] date the settlement with certainty to the 10th-century, basing her above-described theory on this (Wolf 2003, 95–100).

The vessel forms, rim types, decorative motifs and materials of contemporary settlements show a picture similar to that of the vessels from graves. As J. Kvassay also stated, the difference is in their size, since the mean height of vessels from graves is smaller than the mean height of vessels for everyday usage (Kvassay 1982, 19). The histogram showing vessel volumes on *Appendix 2: Fig. 5* is also an illustration of this. Although scientific analysis has not yet been carried out on the vessels I studied, all seem to have been fired at an appropriate temperature, which does not indicate that these had been manufactured for burial. A few examples may weaken this argument (Karos-Eperjesszög III/19 vessel, Ibrány-Esbóhalom Grave 165), there is, however, not enough evidence to assume that pottery was manufactured specifically for burial in the 10th–11th-centuries. Traces of secondary burning and the use of grooves for lids all suggest that these were implements used for cooking. The material from Edelény also contained a number of vessels with the archaic decoration on the inside of the rim (wavy line bundles), whose lack on the vessels from graves in the region has already been pointed out.

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39 I would like to thank M. Wolf for drawing my attention to this material and made it available for study.

40 The stratigraphy of Borsod has been critically reviewed recently by M. Mordovin: Mordovin 2010.

SUMMARY

My work was an attempt to sketch various tendencies and regional differences based on the study of vessels from graves in the study region. Based on the currently available evidence, in the light of available authentic excavations and the number of vessels, the task in not unproblematic, and obviously the observer influences the observation.[41] The statements, that in the course of time an increasing number of vessels were decorated (most of the vessels dated to the first half of the 10th-century are undecorated) and that by the turn of the millennium the elongated jar type disappears, still remain uncertain, especially in the light of the fact that in the 11th-century much less vessels from graves represent the pottery manufacture of the period than in the 10th-century. With regard to the manufacturing technology of the vessels, the phenomenon observed in the study area, that we cannot expect vessels made on a tournette in the 11th-century, also seems incidental. This technology appears sporadically in the 10th–11th-centuries, and we can assume its gradual disappearance with time. In the light of the examination of decoration it is striking that the wavy line and wavy line bundle motifs, which are survivals from the previous period, are present to a certain percentage, except for the area of the modern Hajdú-Bihar County, where the motif appears only on the vessel from Bihar. Based on the available data and the dating provided by metal objects, the appearance of the wavy line as the single decoration on a vessel is confined to the first half or two thirds of the 10th-century and is a rare phenomenon. But we have to take into account regional differences to an increased extent. If we look at this motif in the material of the Little Hungarian Plain, we can see that it still exists in the first half of the 12th-century (see the vessel of the already-mentioned coin find of Mosontétény). Decoration appears more frequently in the upper two thirds of the vessel from the last third of the 10th-century than in the first half or first two thirds of the century, when incised decoration on the upper half or just the shoulder of the vessel seems to be more common. This is, however, only an uncertain conclusion based on a small number of finds. It is important to emphasize that based on the finds available to me for examination it can be stated that the cog-wheel pattern is not present in the 10th-century. This result is in conformity with the results of settlement research. We cannot ignore the fact, however, that internal decoration on the rim of the vessels is represented east of the Danube only by the vessel of Grave 44 at Törökszentmiklós-Szenttamási, although this find is unique anyway because of the decoration on the inside of the rim (nail impressions), as opposed to the settlement ceramics of the study area.

I tried to create regional divisions based on rim shape, decoration, vessel typology and the distribution of base stamps. The material is the least representative in modern Pest and Nógrád Counties, while the most vessels come from sites in the Upper Tisza region. This should hold us back form drawing wide-ranging conclusions. A certain similarity between the vessels from the cemetery of the Zemplén and Heves regions (indicating maybe some sort of connection?) can now be outlined, although this may be only the result of the extent of research. With regard to the regional differences of the Hajdú-Bihar County area (the single occurrence of the wavy line bundle decoration; the use of rounded rims in the north, cut-off rims in the south), we have to bear in mind that this might also be the result of the inadequate number of finds. Based on the vessels (or maybe only due to the low number of vessels?) it seems that other regional differences, as mentioned above with regard to metal objects or the clay cauldrons of the Little Hungarian Plain, cannot be established (TAKÁCS 1993).

In the future, the collection and evaluation of the material from the whole Carpathian Basin and the new results of settlement research may help us answer numerous questions, refine chronology, delineate regional differences or investigate whether the territory of identifiable workshop areas coincide with metallurgical regions. A complete material collection will hopefully provide more clues to decide whether there indeed are traits characteristic only for the 10th-century, to distinguish the settlements of the first century following the Hungarian Conquest, and to date the traces of the earliest settlements of the Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin.

Translated by Vajk SZEVERÉNYI

[41] Tendencies are similarly difficult to identify in the case of Avar Period vessels from burials, even in an apparently optimal situation. See FIEDLER 1992b.

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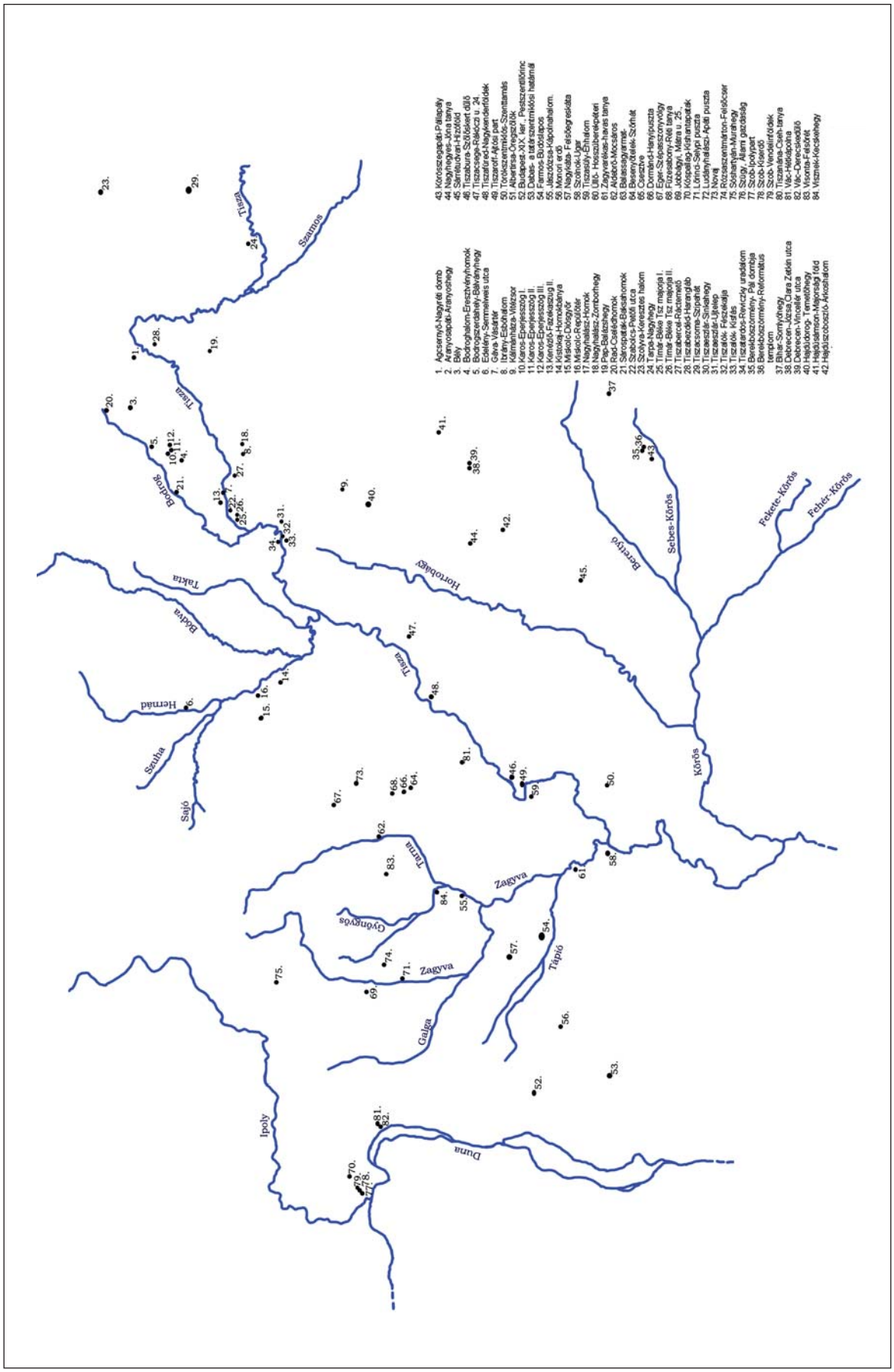

Fig. 1: Geographic distribution of graves with vessels dated to the 10th–11th-century

Fig. 2: II/1. wheel-made technology group (vessels made on "primitive wheel"). 1: Visznek-Kecskehegy, Grave 35; 2: Hajdúszoboszló-Árkoshalom, 189 Grave; 3: Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave 1; 4: Ibrány-Esbóhalom, Grave 165

Fig. 3: II/2. A wheel-made technology group (vessels made on classic hand-wheel)

1

2

3

4

Fig. 4: 1, 4: II/2.B wheel-made technology group (vessel thrown on hand-wheel): Nagyhegyes-Józsatanya; 2–3: III. wheel-made technology group ("mixed technology": thrown neck and hand-wheeled body): Bély

Fig. 5: II/3. wheel-made technology group (vessels thrown on "fast wheel"): 1: Sóshartyán-Murahegy, Grave 3; 2: Karos-Eperjesszög, II, Grave 66; 3: Miskolc-Repülőtér, Grave 12

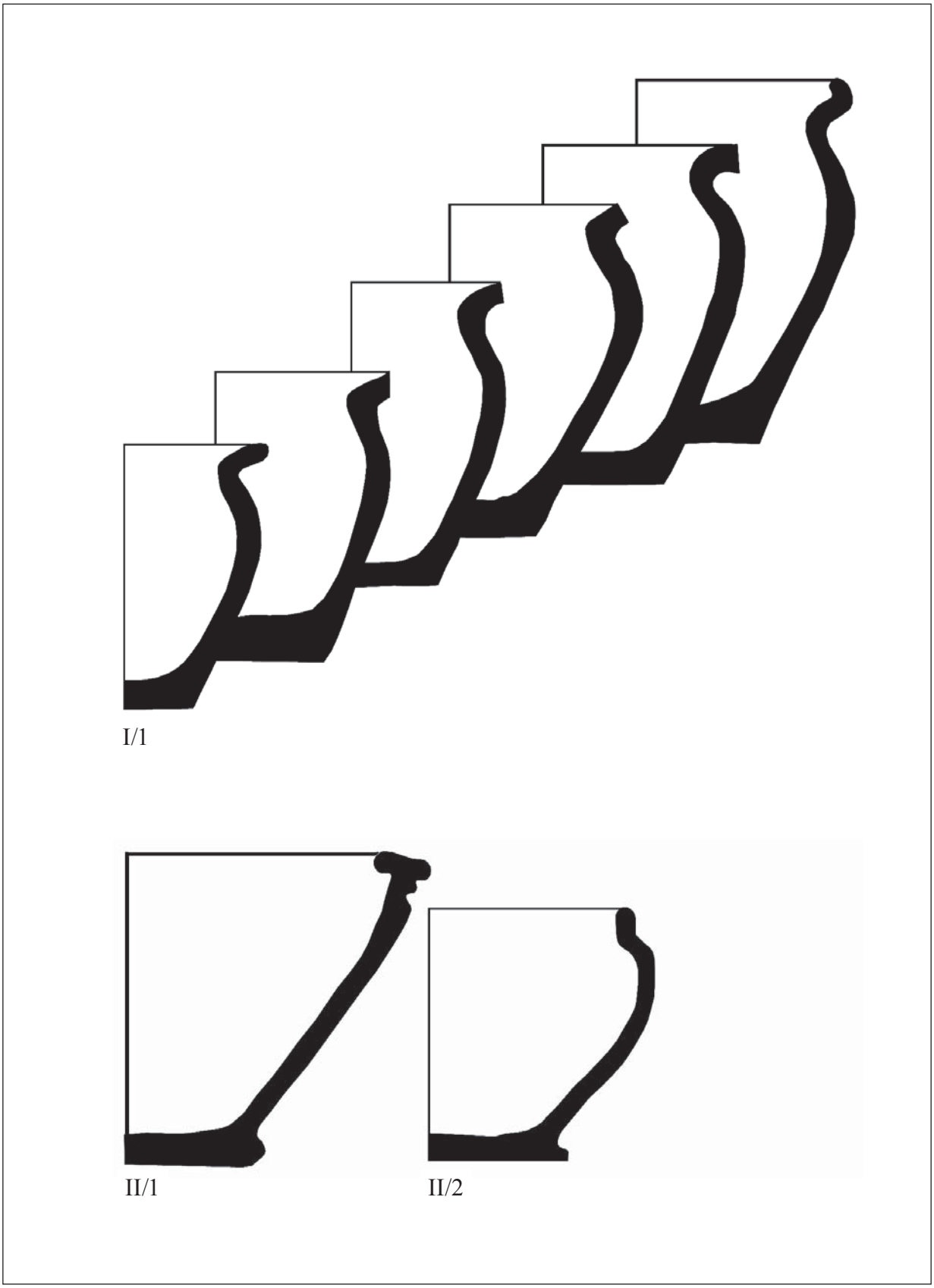

Fig. 6: Types of the jars and bowls: I/1: jars with wide mouth; II/1: flower pot shaped bowl; II/2: bowl with inverted rim

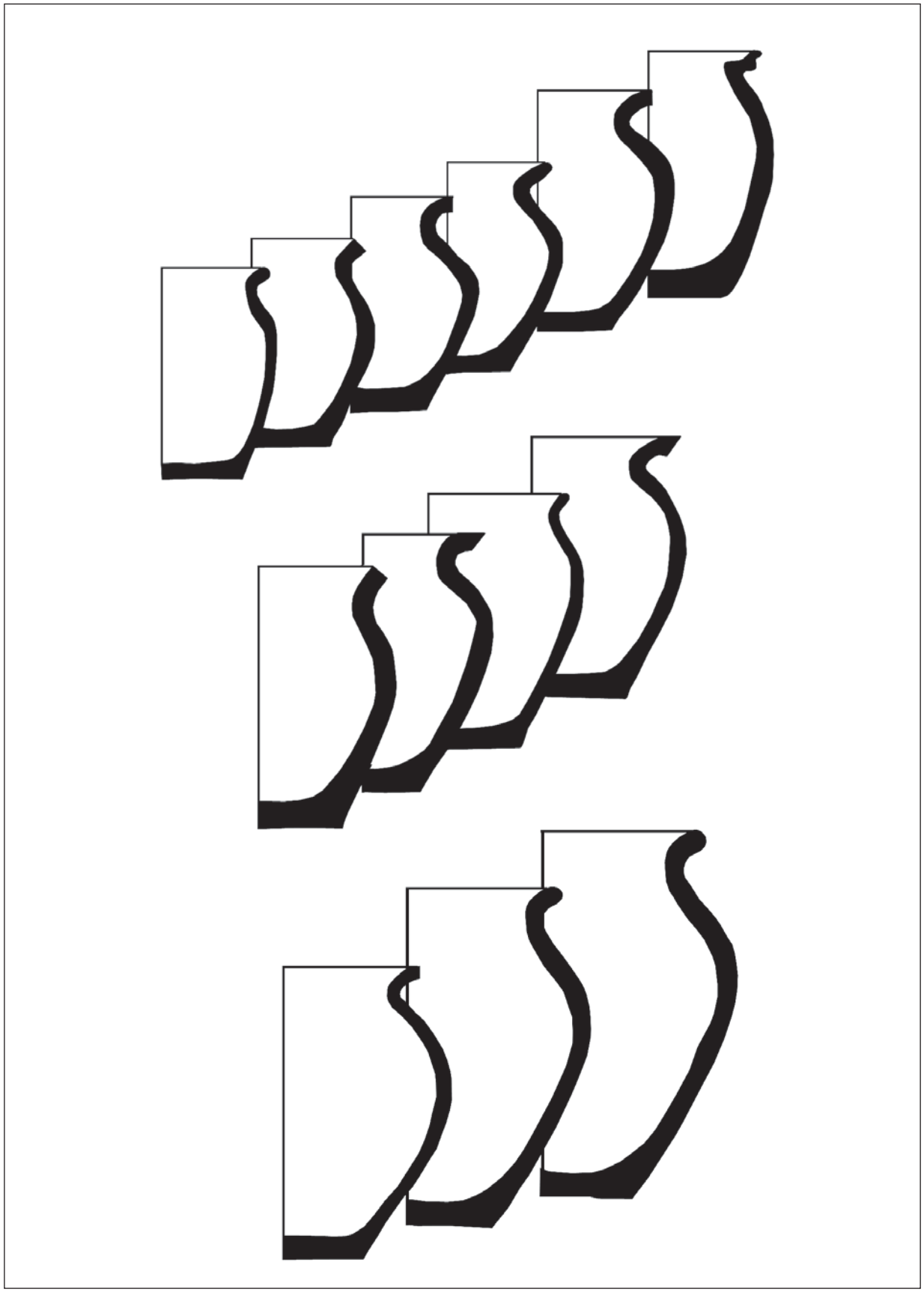

Fig. 7: Types of globular jars

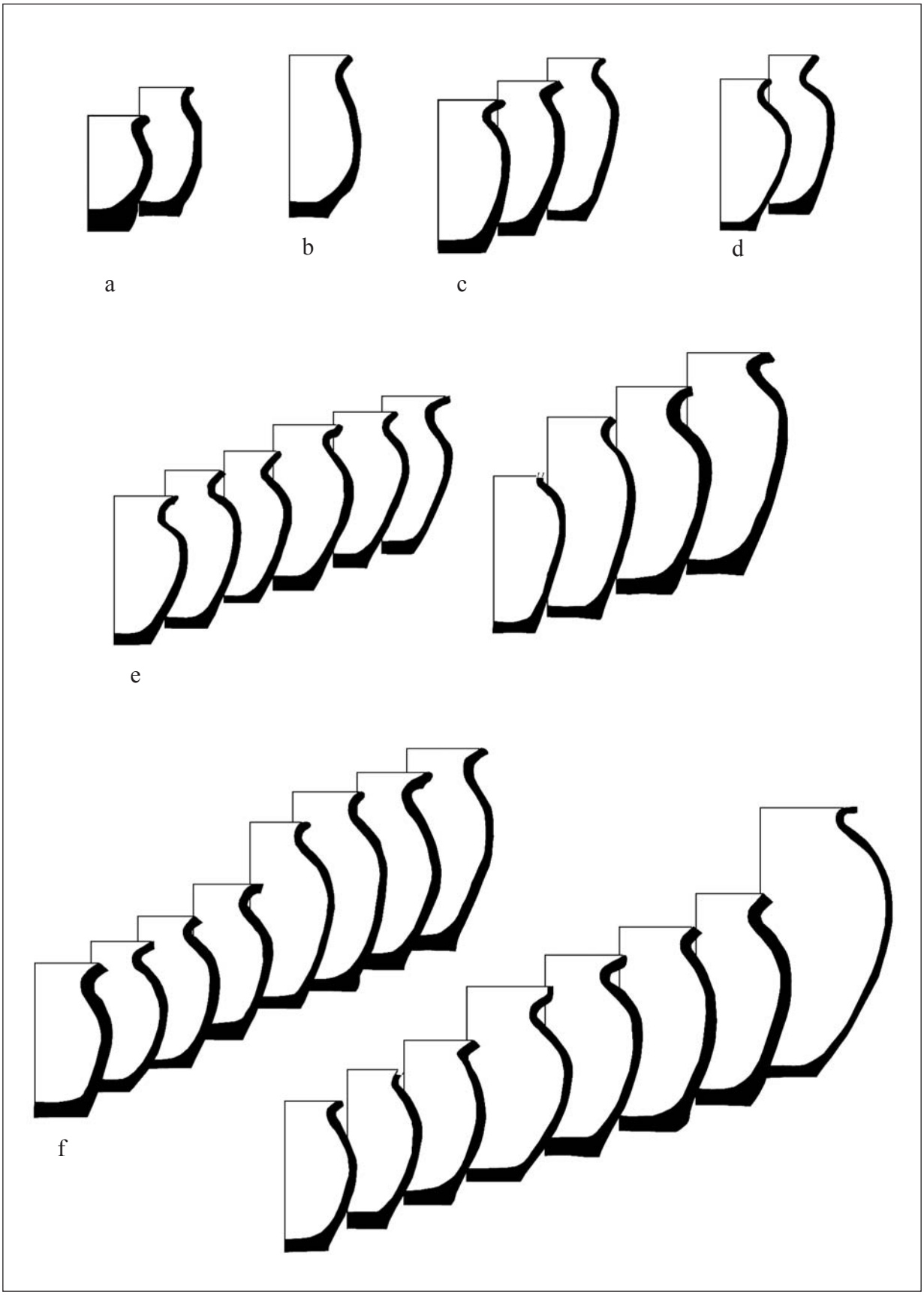

Fig. 8: Types of normal jars

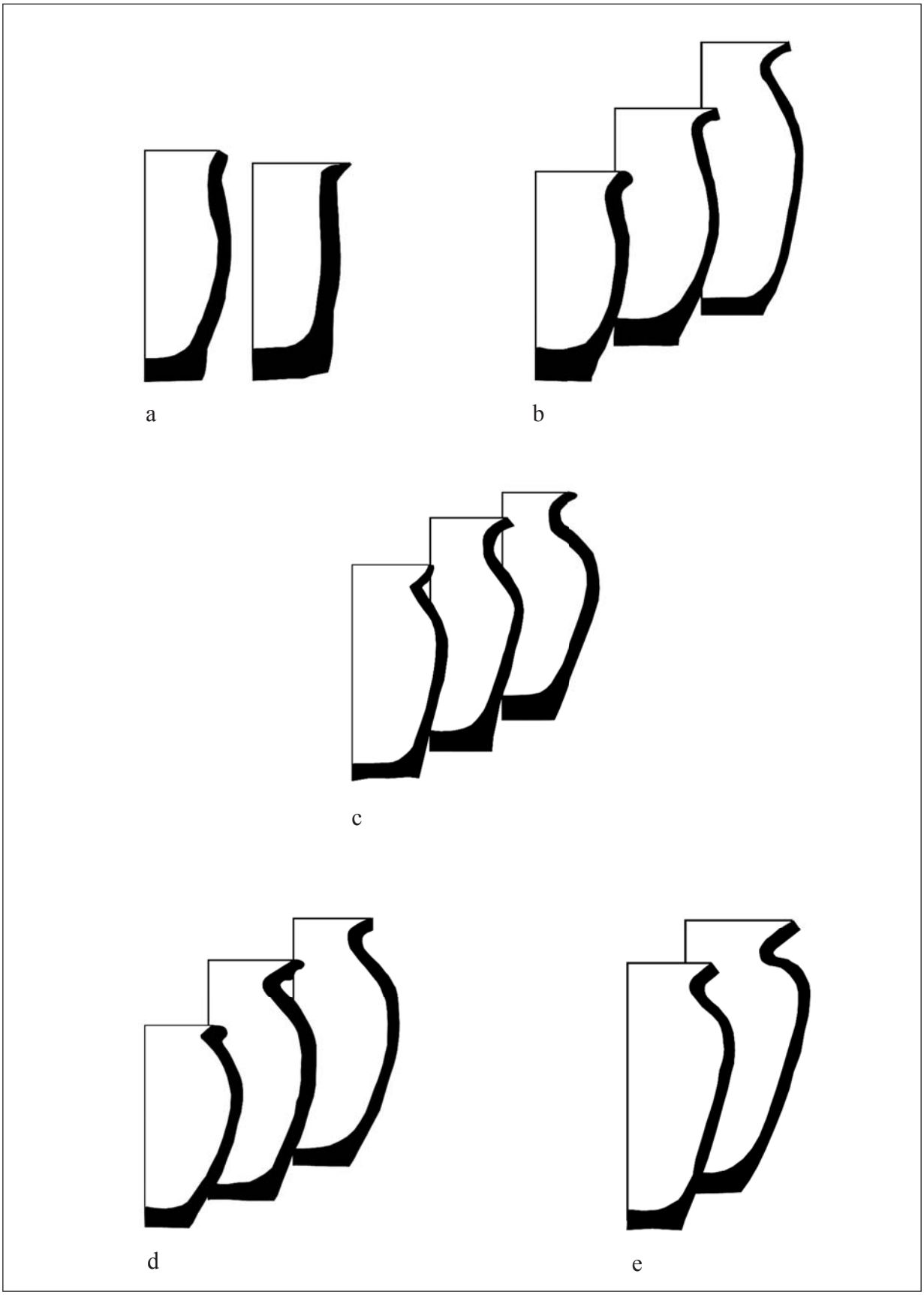

Fig. 9: Types of elongated jars

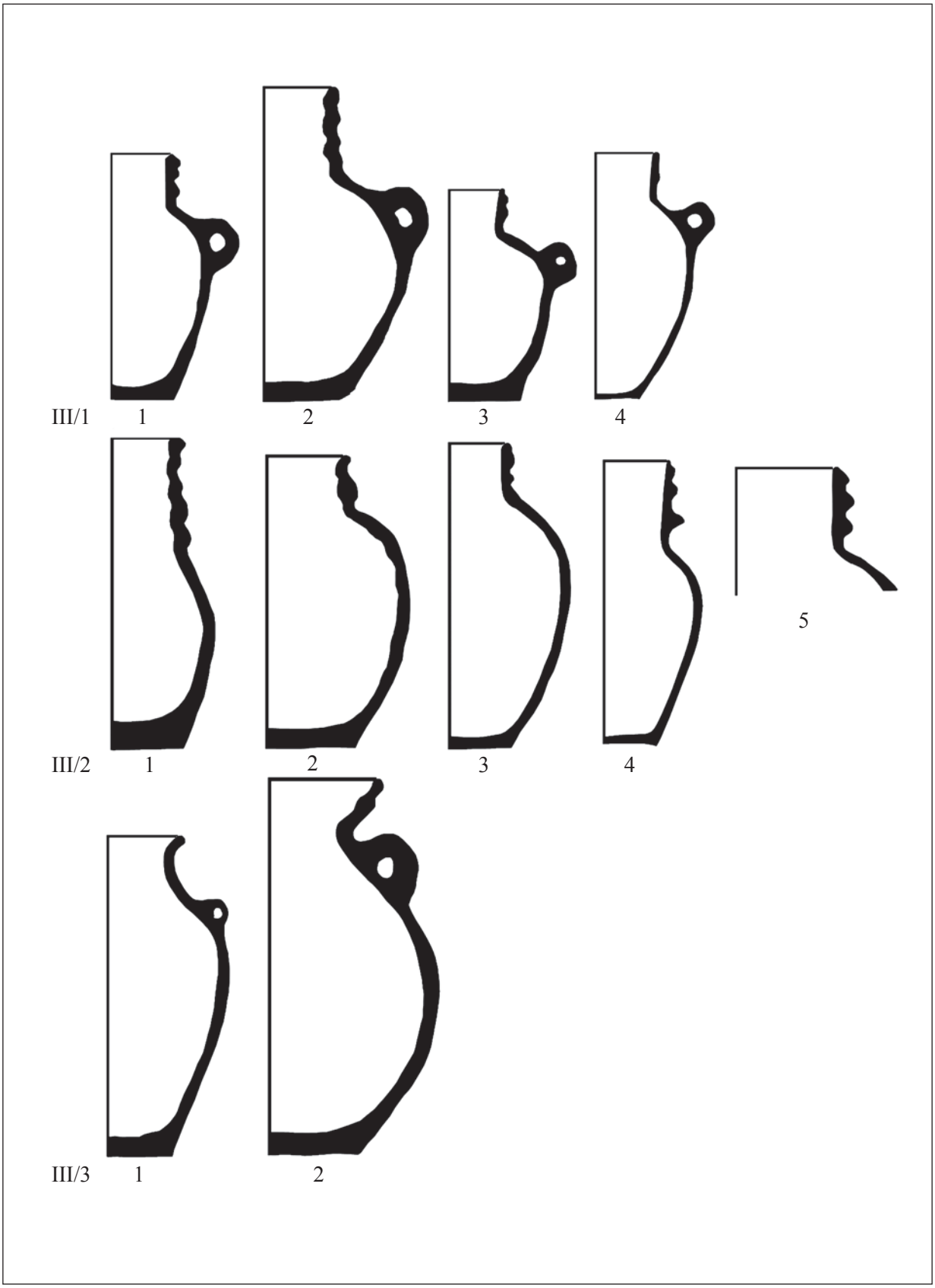

Fig. 10: Types of vessels with cylindrical neck: III/1: Vessels with ribbed neck and handles; III/2: Vessels with ribbed neck, without handles; III/3: Vessels with non-ribbed neck and handles

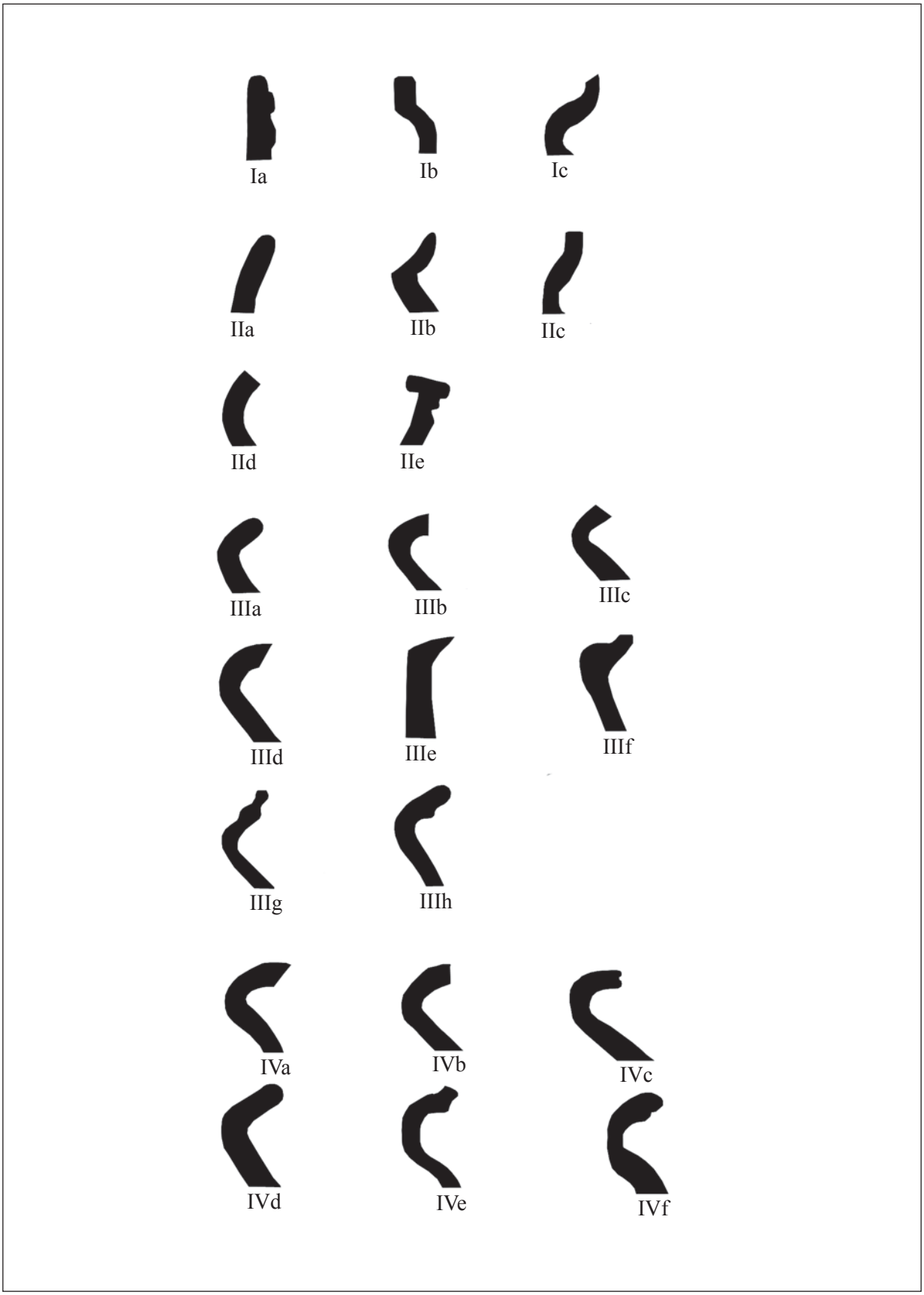

Fig. 11: The classification of rim types

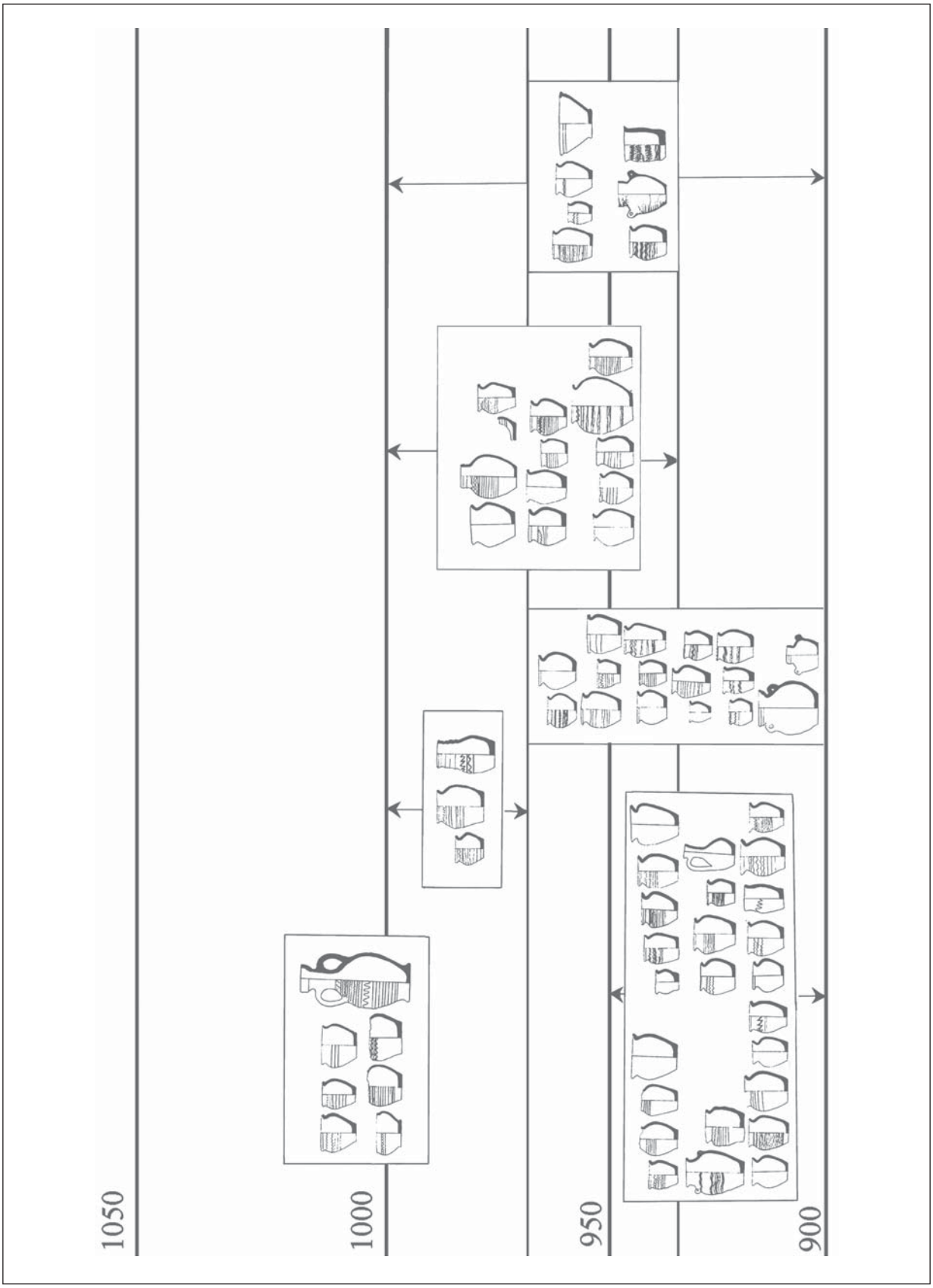

Fig. 12: Chronology based on dating the associated finds from graves with vessels and the various phases of the given cemeteries

Fig. 13: 1: Ágcsernyő-Nagyréti domb; 2: Bély; 3: Bodroghalom-Eresztvényhomok, Grave 9; 4: Bodroghalom-Eresztvényhomok, Grave 18; 5: Bodroghalom-Eresztvényhomok, Grave 24; 6: Bodroghalom-Eresztvényhomok, Grave 25

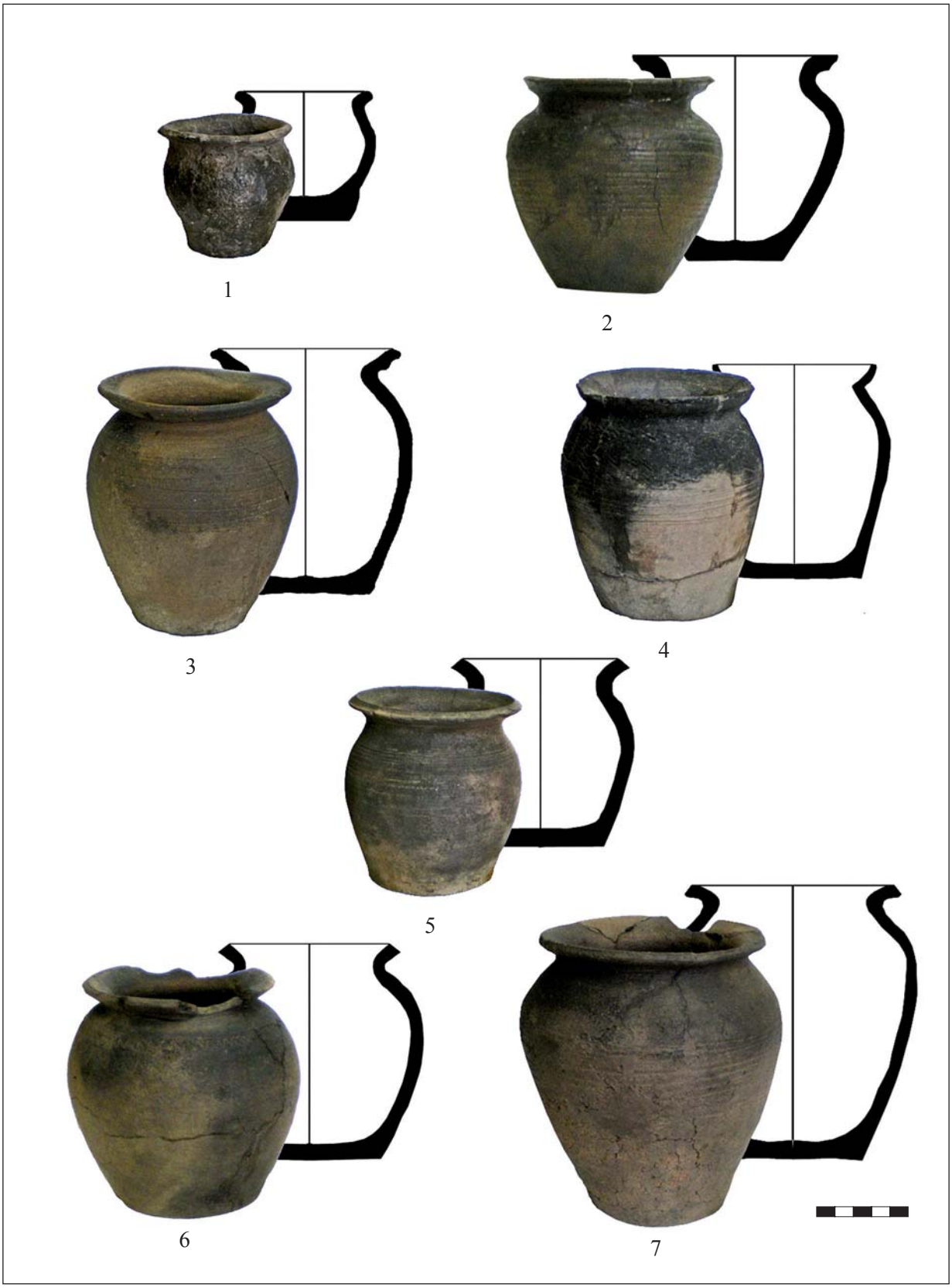

Fig. 14: 1: Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave; 2: Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave 24; 3: Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave 22; 4: Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave 3; 5: Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave 64; 6: Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave 39; 7: Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave 48

Fig. 15: 1: Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave 66; 2: Karos-Eperjesszög III, Grave 18; 3: Karos-Eperjesszög III, Grave 16; 4: Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave 31

Fig. 16: 1: Bodrogszerdahely-Bálványhegy, Grave I; 2: Bodrogszerdahely-Bálványhegy, Grave 7; 3: Sárospatak-Baksahomok, Grave 3; 4: Miskolc-Repülőtér, stray find; 5: Miskolc-Repülőtér, Grave 12; 6: Edelény-Semmelweis utca, Grave 7

Fig. 17: 1: Pap-Balázshegy, stray find; 2: Gáva-Vásártér, Grave 18; 3: Nagyhalász-Zomborhegy, Grave 1; 4: Ibrány-Esbóhalom, Grave 164; 5: Tiszatardos-Reviczky uradalom; 6: Ibrány-Esbóhalom, Grave 164; 7: Ibrány-Esbóhalom, Grave 165

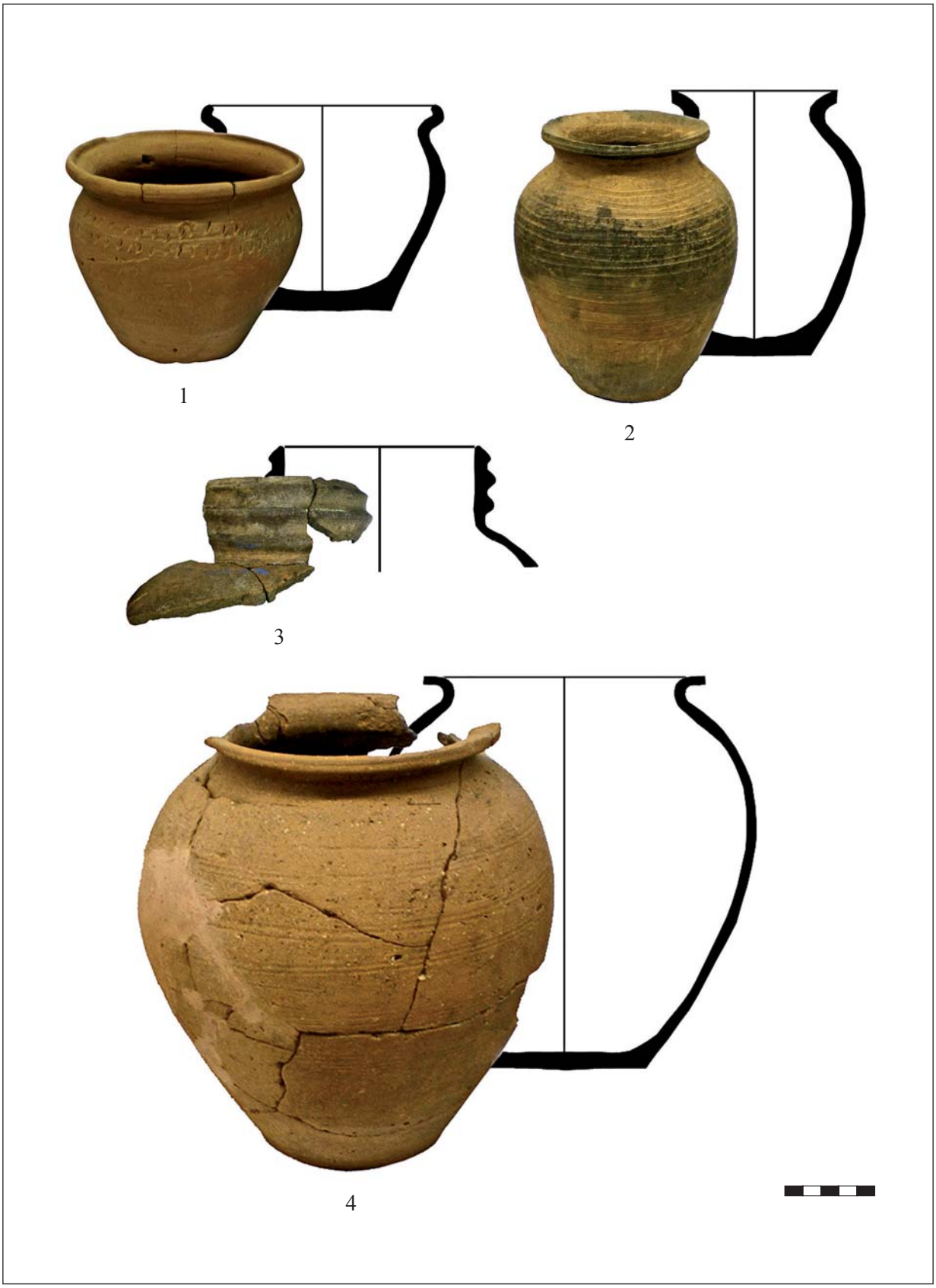

Fig. 18: 1: Kálmánháza-Vitézsor, Grave 39; 2: Ibrány-Esbóhalom, Grave 255; 3: Kálmánháza-Vitézsor, Grave 39; 4: Ibrány-Esbóhalom, Grave 251

Fig. 19: 1: Kenézlő-Fazekaszug II, Grave 32; 2: Kistokaj-Homokbánya, Grave 59; 3: Kenézlő-Fazekaszug II, Grave 38; 4: Kenézlő-Fazekaszug II, Grave 33; 5: Kenézlő-Fazekaszug II, Grave 32; 6: Kenézlő-Fazekaszug II, Grave 37; 7: Kistokaj-Homokbánya, stray find

Fig. 20: 1: Szabolcs-Petőfi utca, Grave 389; 2: Szabolcs-Petőfi utca, Grave 382; 3: Szabolcs-Petőfi utca, Grave 387; 4: Tímár-Béke Tsz. majorja I, Grave 24; 5: Tímár-Béke Tsz. majorja I, Grave 15

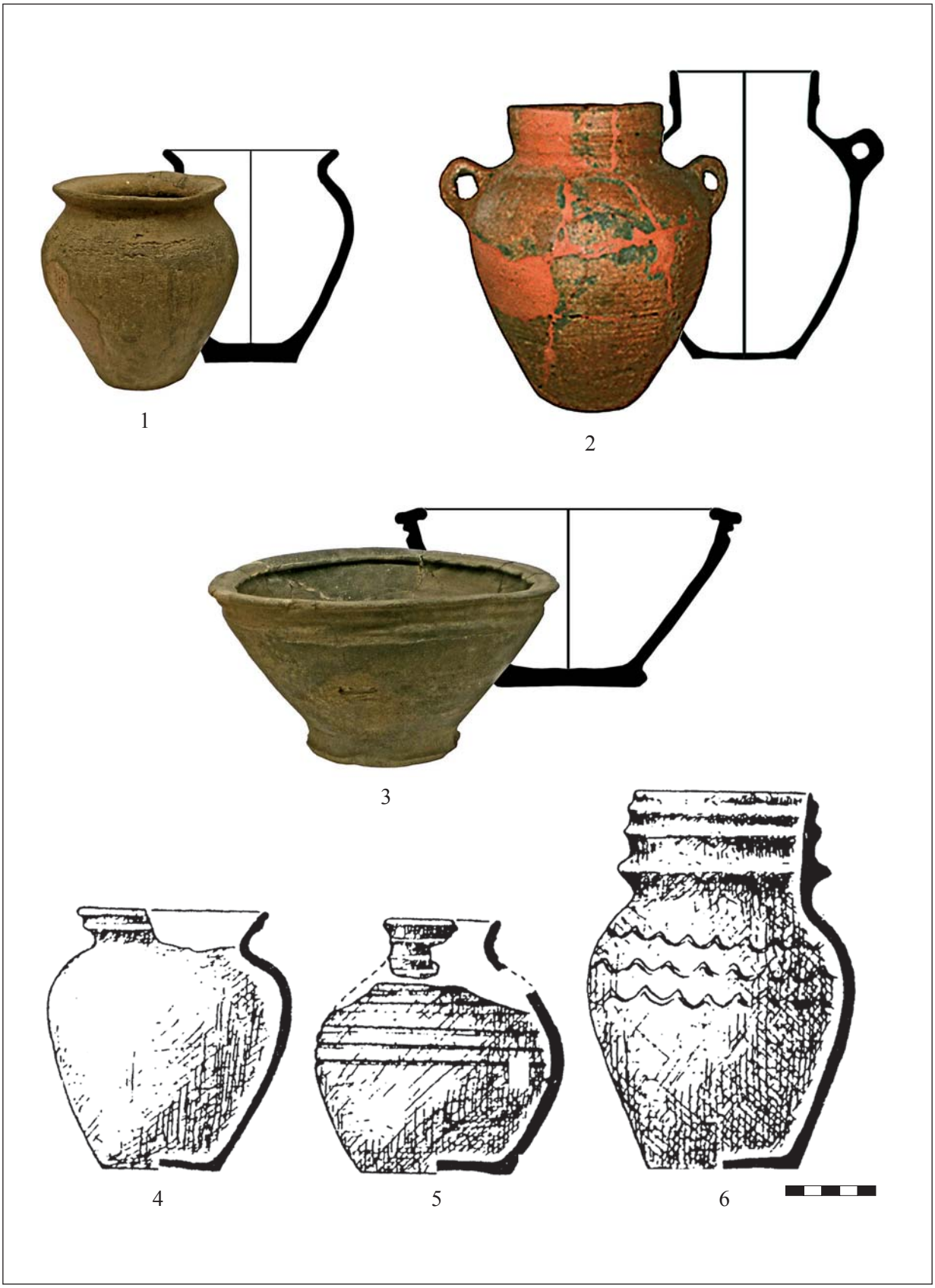

Fig. 21: 1: Tiszabercel-Ráctemető, Grave 8; 2: Tarpa-Nagyhegy; 3: Tiszabercel-Ráctemető, Grave 9; 4–6: Tiszacsoma-Szipahát (after Kobály *2001)*

Fig. 22: 1: Tímár-Béke Tsz. majorja II, Grave 4; 2: Tiszabezdéd-Harangláb, Grave 3; 3: Tímár-Béke Tsz. majorja I, Grave 16; 4: Tiszaeszlár-Újtelep, Grave 4

Fig. 23: 1: Tiszacsege- Rákóczi utca; 2: Debrecen-Józsa, Grave 23;
3: Berekböszörmény-Reformátustemplom, Grave 1; 4: Tiszabura-Szőlőskert dűlő, Grave A;
5: Nagyhegyes-Józsa tanya; 6: Hajdúsámson-Majorsági föld

Fig. 24: 1: Sárrétudvari-Hízóföld, Grave 88; 2: Dormánd-Hanyipuszta, Grave 6; 3: Törökszentmiklós-Szenttamás, Grave 39; 4: Aldebrő-Mocsáros, Grave 15; 5: Dormánd-Hanyipuszta, Grave 8; 6: Törökszentmiklós-Szenttamás, Grave 44; 7: Tiszanána-Csehtanya, Grave 4

Fig. 25: 1–2: Eger-Szépasszonyvölgy; 3: Szob-Kiserdő, Grave 60; 4: Szob-Kiserdő, Grave 73; 5: Szob-Kiserdő, Grave 41; 6: Szob-Kiserdő, Grave 23

Fig. 26: Sóshartyán-Murahegy, Grave 3

APPENDIX 1

Catalogue – sites with vessel(s) from graves dated to the 10th–11th-century

Site	Most important literature
The Upper Tisza region	
Ágcsernyő-Nagyréti domb	Pastor 1952, 485–487; Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 27.
Aranyosapáti-Aranyoshegy	Dienes 1961, 193; Tettemanti 1975, 83.
Bély	Eisner 1966, 166.
Bodroghalom-Eresztvényhomok, Grave 9, 18, 20, 22, 25	Révész 2006, 414–415.
Bodrogszerdahely-Bálványhegy, Grave I/1, 7	ERDÉLYI 1961, 17–18; Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 67.
Edelény-Semmelweis utca, Grave 5, 7	unpublished
Gáva-Vásártér, Grave 18	Kalicz 1958, 207; Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 329; Istvánovits 2003, 58.
Ibrány-Esbóhalom, Grave 164, 165, 251, 255	Istvánovits 2003, 71–112.
Kálmánháza-Vitézsor, Grave 39	unpublished
Karos-Eperjesszög I, Grave 12, 13	Dókus 1900; Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 46; Révész 1996a, 13–15.
Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave 1, 3, 22, 24, 31, 39, 48, 64, 66	Révész 1996a, 15–33.
Karos-Eperjesszög III, Grave 16, 18, 19	Révész 1996a, 33–38.
Kenézlő-Fazekaszug II, Grave 32, 33, 37, 38, 41	Jósa 1914, 304–340; Fettich 1931, 78; Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 47.
Kistokaj- Homokbánya, Grave 59	Végh 1993, 53–103.
Miskolc-Diósgyőr	Révész 1992, 107.
Miskolc-Repülőtér, Grave 9, 11, 12	Révész 1992, 98–103.
Nagyhalász-Homoktanya	Jósa 1914, 174–176.
Nagyhalász-Zomborhegy, Grave 1908/B; Grave Jósa 3	Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 55; Istvánovits 2003, 146–149; Kovács 1989, 171–173.
Pap-Balázshegy	Kralovánszky 1960, 27–34.
Sárospatak-Baksatanya, Grave 3	Fodor 1996a, 168–169.
Szabolcs-Petőfi utca 382, Grave 387, 389	Kovács 1994, 1–406.
Szolyva-Keresztes halom, Grave 1	Lehoczky 1870, 201–202; Kobály 2001, 217–218.
Tarpa-Nagy-hegy	IstvánovitS 1996, 19–25.
Tímár Béke Tsz majorja, Grave 1, 15, 16, 24	Kovács 1988, 125–145.
Tímár Béke Tsz majorja II, Grave 4	Kovács 1988, 145–146
Tiszabercel-Ráctemető, Grave 8, 9	Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 78; Csallány 1959, 300; Istvánovits 2003, 190–193.

Tiszabezdéd-Harangláb, Grave 3	Révész 2003, 432–440.
Tiszacsoma-Szipa hát	БалаГури–Фодор 1998, 166–196; Kobály 2001, 207–209.
Tiszaeszlár-Fenyvespart II, Grave 11, 12	Tóth 2008, 32–48.
Tiszaeszlár-Sinkahegy	Jósa 1914, 172–174; Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 79.
Tiszaeszlár-Ujtelep, Grave 4	Fodor 1996b, 194–195.
Tiszalök-Fészekalja	Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 79.
Tiszalök-Kisfástanya	Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 79–80.
Tiszatardos-Reviczky uradalom	Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 80.
East of the Tisza river to Bihar in the east and the Sebes-Körös river in the South	
Berekböszörmény-Pál dombja	Mesterházy 1968, 47; Nepper 1996, 153.
Berekböszörmény-Református templom, Grave 1	Nepper 2002, 25–26.
Bihar-Somlyóhegy, Grave 3	Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 1962, 24; Hampel 1907, 104–106.
Debrecen-Józsa, Clara Zetkin utca, Grave 23	Nepper 1996, 153; Nepper 2002, 32–33.
Debrecen-Vincellér utca	Nepper 1996, 153.
Hajdúdorog-Temetőhegy	Sőregi 1938, 46–48.
Hajdúsámson-Majorsági föld	Zoltai 1907, 36–39; Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 39; Nepper 1996, 152.
Hajdúszoboszló-Árkoshalom, Grave 147, 189	Nepper 2002, 58–107.
Körösszegapáti-Pállapály, Grave 27	Nepper 1996, 153, 156; Nepper 2002, 122–126.
Nagyhegyes-Józsa tanya	Kralovánszky 1965, 40.
Sárrétudvari-Hízóföld, Grave 88, 190	Nepper 2002, 358–359.
Tiszabura-Szőlőskert dűlő, Grave A	Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 78; Horváth 1934, 141–144.
Tiszacsege-Rákóczi u. 24	Nepper 1996, 153.
Tiszafüred–Nagykenderföldek, Grave 71	Fodor 1974, 68–69.
Tiszaroff-Ajtósi part, Grave 2	Kvassay 1982, 221–222.
Törökszentmiklós-Szenttamás, Grave 39, 44	unpublished
The northern third of the Danube–Tisza interfluve to the southern border of Pest and Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok Counties	
Albertirsa-Öregszőlők	Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 20.
Budapest-XIX. Ker, Pestszentllőrinc-Gloriette	László 1942, 799; Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 124.
Dabas-Tatárszentmiklósi határ	Kiss 1969, 179.
Farmos-Büdöslapos	Pálóczi 1964, 62.
Jászdózsa-Kápolnahalom	Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 44.
Monori erdő, Grave 3, 4, 5	Török 1958, 207.

Nagykáta- Felsőegreskáta	Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 713.
Szolnok-Ugar (Lenin-Tsz), Grave 4, 5, 10, 14, 18, 28	Madaras 1996, 65–70.
Tiszasüly-Éhhalom	Madaras 1996, 74.
Üllő-Hosszúberekpéteri, Grave 2	Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 82.
Zagyvarékas-Avas	Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 84.
Northern Hungary	
Aldebrő-Mocsáros, Grave 15	Szabó 1963, 103–105; Révész 2008, 18–51.
Balassagyarmat	Patay 1957, 60.
Besenyőtelek-Szőrhát	Szabó 1969, 55; Révész 2008, 52–53.
Csesztve	Nyáry 1904, 359.
Dormánd-Hanyipuszta, Grave 6, 8	Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 32; Szabó 1963, 163–164; Révész 2008, 74–95.
Eger-Szépasszonyvölgy, Grave 26	Bartalos 1899, 129–130, 353–360; Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 33; Révész 2008, 109–123.
Füzesabony-Réti tanya	Foltiny 1885, 125; SZABÓ 1969, 55; Révész 2008, 181.
Jobbágyi, Mátra u. 25	Soós 1982, 79.
Kóspallag-Kishantapatak, Grave 1	Langó 2003, 81–85.
Lőrinci-Selypi puszta	Könyöki 1892, 227–235; Fehér–Éry–Kralo-vánszky 1962, 51; Szabó 1969, 57; Révész 2008, 244–247.
Ludányhalászi- Apáti puszta, Grave 2	Pintér 1887, 430–432.
Novaj	Bartalos 1899, 358–360; Szabó 1969, 55; Révész 2008, 252.
Rózsaszentmárton-Felsőcser, Grave 5	Szabó 1964, 66; Révész 2008, 267–271.
Sóshartyán-Murahegy, Grave 3	Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 67; Fodor 1996c 406.
Szécsény, Szügy állami gazdaság	Gádor 1970, 57–58.
Szob-Ipolypart, Grave 4, 13	Bakay 1978, 53–55.
Szob-Kiserdő, Grave 15, 23, 32, 41, 60, 73, 77	Bakay 1978, 8, 128–141.
Szob-Vendelin-földek Grave 1, 9, 12, 16, 17, 23, 25, 30, 48, 67, 108, 118	Török 1956, 129–135; Bakay 1978, 144.
Tiszanána-Cseh-tanya, Grave 4	Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 80; Szabó 1969, 55; Révész 2008, 283–390.
Vác-Hétkápolna	Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 82.
Vác-Derecskedűlő	Fehér–Éry–Kralovánszky 1962, 82.
Visonta-Felsőrét, Grave 9	Révész 2008, 349–377.
Visznek-Kecskehegy, Grave 35	Szabó 1969, 55, 57; Török 1975, 322–338; Révész 2008, 380–386.

APPENDIX 2

	BÁCSA-SZENT VID	BÁCSA-SZENT VID	MÉNFŐCSANAK-SZELES	MÉNFŐCSANAK-SZELES	COLUMN TOTALS	COLUMN TOTALS
	observed value	expected value	observed value	expected value	observed	theoretical
undecorated	226	239,10	233	219,89	459	459
straight line bundle	130	103,14	68	94,85	198	198
wavy line bundle	91	68,24	40	62,75	131	131
scroll	68	121,37	165	111,62	233	233
wavy line bundle + straigth line bundle	25	16,66	7	15,33	32	32
wavy line	25	22,92	19	21,07	44	44
densely incised scrolls	20	13,54	6	12,45	26	26
ROW TOTALS	585	585	538	538		1123
Chi Square = 96.441						
Degrees of Freedom = 6						
P = 0						

Fig. 1: Chi-square test – statistical study of the deocirative motivs used of the ceramic finds, et two early medieval sites, ceramic finds, Bácsa-Szend Vid domb and Ménfőcsanak-Szeles (NW-Hungary)

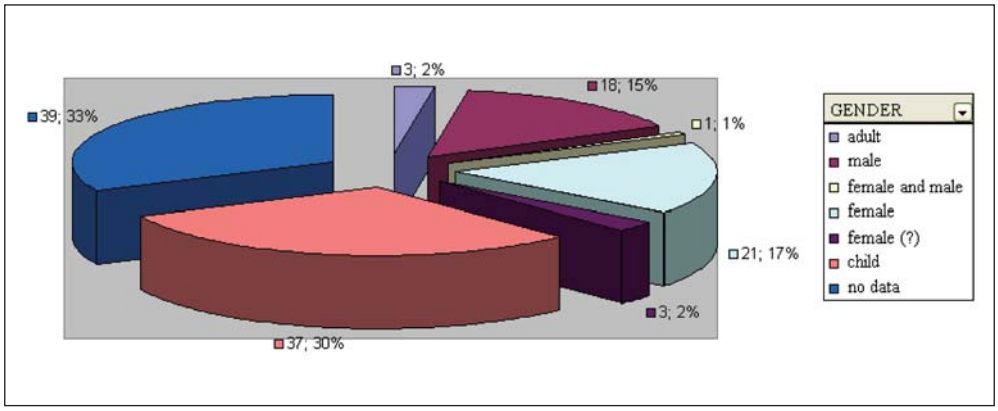

Fig. 2: Sex and graves with vessels

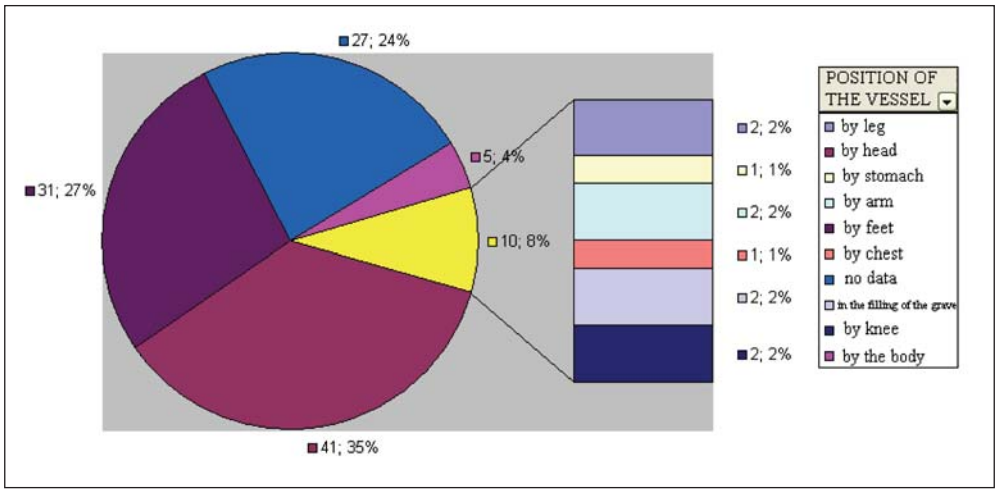

Fig. 3: Position of the vessel in the grave

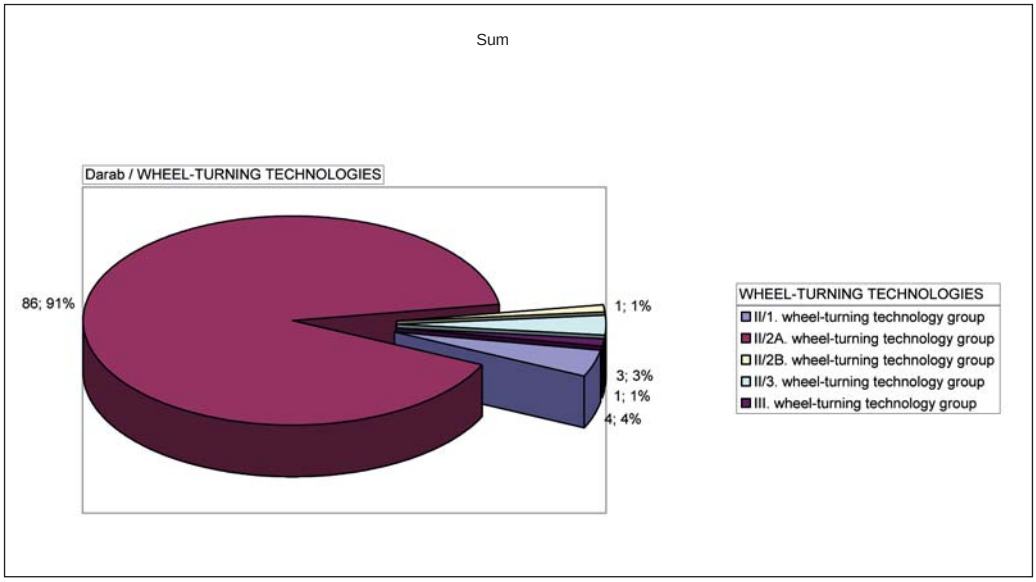

Fig. 4: Technological variability regarding the throwing by vessels from graves dated back to the 10th–11th-century

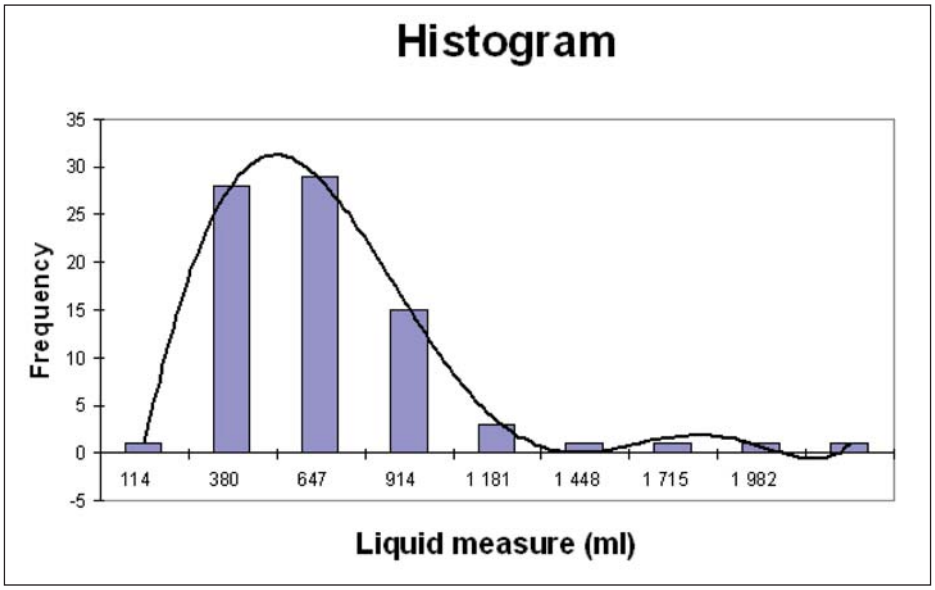

Fig. 5: Histogram of vessels' liquid measure from graves

APPENDIX 3

Classification of vessels from graves dated to the 10th–11th-century

Type I: Jars	
Subtype I/1: jars with wide mouth	
Group I/1A	Sárospatak-Baksahomok, Grave 4
	Tímár-Béke Tsz. majorja I, Grave 15
	Bodroghalom-Eresztvényhomok, Grave 9
	Szabolcs-Petőfi utca, Grave 387
	Tímár-Béke Tsz. majorja I, Grave 24
Group I/1B	Kálmánháza-Vitézsorok, Grave 39
	Tiszabura-Szőlőskert dűlő, Grave A
Subtype I/2: globular jars	
	Szob-Kiserdő, Grave 60
	Kistokaj-Homokbánya, szórvány
	Aldebrő-Mocsáros, Grave 15
	Gáva-Vásártér, Grave18
	Karos-Eperjesszög III, Grave 18
	Dormánd-Hanyipuszta, Grave 8
	Bodrogszerdahely-Bálványos, Grave 7
	Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave 24
	Tiszanána-Csehtanya, Grave 4
	Kóspallag-Kishantapatak, Grave 1
	Dormánd-Hanyipuszta, szórvány
	Eger-Szépasszonyvölgy, Grave 26
	Bodroghalom-Eresztvényhomok, Grave 25
	Miskolc-Repülőtér, szórvány
Subtype I/3: normal jars	
Group I/3A	Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave 1
	Debrecen-Józsa, Grave 23
Group I/3B	Ibrány-Esbóhalom, Grave 165
Group I/3C	Kenézlő-Fazekaszug, Grave 32/2
	Kenézlő-Fazekaszug, Grave 38
	Monori erdő, Grave 3
Group I/3D	Törökszentmiklós-Szenttamás, Grave 39
	Kenézlő-Fazekaszug, Grave 37

Group I/3E	Szob-Kiserdő, Grave 73
	Tiszatardos-Reviczky uradalom
	Kenézlő-Fazekaszug, Grave 3
	Ibrány-Esbóhalom, Grave 164
	Tiszabercel-Ráctemető, Grave 8
	Pap-Balázshegy, szórvány
	Bodroghalom-Eresztvényhomok, Grave 24
	Tímár-Béke Tsz. majorja I, Grave 16
	Miskolc-Repülőtér, Grave 4
	Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave 48
	Berekböszörmény-Református templom, Grave 1
	Tímár-Béke Tsz. majorja II, Grave 4
	Tiszabezdéd-Harangláb, Grave 3
	Berekböszörmény-Pál dombja
Group I/3F	Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave 64
	Eger-Szépasszonyvölgy, Grave 21
	Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave 39
	Szob-Kiserdő, Grave 23
	Ibrány-Esbóhalom, Grave 164
	Szabolcs-Petőfi utca, Grave 389
	Bodroghalom-Eresztvényhomok, Grave 18
	Karos-Eperjesszög III, Grave 16
	Kistokaj-Homokbánya, szórvány
	Kenézlő-Fazekaszug, Grave 33
	Ibrány-Esbóhalom, Grave 251
Subtype I/4: elongated jars	
Group I/4A	Hajdúszoboszló-Árkoshalom, Grave 189
	Visznek-Kecskehegy, Grave 35
Group I/4B	Kistokaj-Homokbánya, Grave 59
	Szob-Kiserdő, Grave 32
	Edelény-Semmelweis utca, Grave 7
Group I/4C	Szabolcs-Petőfi utca, Grave 382
	Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave 22
	Ibrány-Esbóhalom, Grave 255
Group I/4D	Karos-Eperjesszög, Grave 3
	Nagyhalász-Kiszombor, Grave 1
	Sárrétudvari-Hízóföld, Grave 88
Group I/4e.	Dormánd- Hanyipuszta, Grave 6
	Karos-Eperjesszög, Grave 31

Type II: Bowls	
Subtype II/1: flower pot shaped bowl	
	Tiszabercel-Ráctemető, Grave 9
Subtype II/2: bowl with inverted rim	
	Szob-Kiserdő, Grave 41
Type III: Vessels with cylindrical neck	
Subtype III/1: Vessel with ribbed neck and handles	
	Ágcsernyő-Nagyréti domb
	Bély
	Hajdúsámson-Majorsági föld, Grave A
	Tarpa-Nagyhegy
Subtype III/2: Vessels with ribbed neck without handles	
	Miskolc-Repülőtér, Grave 2
	Nagyhegyes-Jónatanya
	Tiszabura-Szőlőskert dűlő
	Tiszacsoma-Szipahát
	Kálmánháza-Vitézsorok, Grave 39
Subtype III/3: Vessels with non-ribbed neck and with handles	
	Bodrogszerdahely I, Grave 1
	Tiszaeszlár-Újtelep, Grave 4
Type IV: Amphora	
	Sóshartyán-Murahegy, Grave 3
Type V: One-handled jar	
	Karos-Eperjesszög II, Grave 66

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

БАН–СТИГА	Българска академия на науките Секция по теория у история на градоустройството
ГСУ-ФИФ	Годишник на Софийския университет, Философско-исторически факултет 63. София 1971.
ГНАМ Пловдив	Годишник на Археологическия
ИАИ	Известия на археологическия институт
ИБАИ	Известия на българския археологически институт
ИБИД	Известия на българското историческо дружествол
ИИМК	Известия на Историческия музей Кюстендил
ИМЮБ	Известия на музеите от Южна България
ИНМВарна	Известия на Народния музей Варна
ППИК	Проблеми на прабългарската история и култура
РА	Российская археология
СА	Советская археология (Москва)

Acta Ant et Arch	Acta Antiqua et Archaeologica (Szeged)
Acta AntHung	Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae (Budapest)
Acta ArchHung	Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae (Budapest)
ActaMN	Acta Musei Napocensis (Cluj)
Agria	Agria. Az Egri Múzeum Évkönyve (Eger)
AHSzeg	Acta Universitas Szegediensis. Acta Historica (Szeged)
Alba Regia	Alba Regia. Annales Musei Stephani Regis (Székesfehérvár)
AR	Archeologické Rohzledy (Praha)
ArchAu	Archaeologica Austriaca (Wien)
ArchBulg	Archaeologica Bulgaria (Sofia)
ArchÉrt	Archaeologiai Értesítő (Budapest)
ArchHung	Archaeologia Hungarica (Budapest)
ArchMed	Archeologia Medievale (Firenze)
ArchSlov–Mon	Archaeologica Slovaca Monographie
ArchR	Archaeological Research (Radnevo)
ArchSlov	Archaeologia Slovaca (Bratislava)
ArOr	Archiv Orientální (praha)
Arrabona	Arrabona. A Győri Xántus János Múzeum Évkönyve (Győr)
Balcanoslavica	Balcanoslavica (Prilep)
BAR	British Archaeological Reports
BMMK	A Békés Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei (Békéscsaba)
BiblArch	Bibliotheca de Archeologie (Bucureşti)
BudRég	Budapest Régiségei (Budapest)
Byzantion	Byzantion. Revue Internationale des Études Byzantines (Bruxelles)
Byz-Bulg	Byzantino-Bulgarica (Sofia)
BVbl	Bayerische Vorgeschichtsblätter (München)
CAB	Cercetări Arheologice in Bucureşti (Bucureşti)
ComArchHung	Communicationes Archaeologicae Hungariae (Budapest)
Cumania	Cumania. A Bács-Kiskun Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei (Kecskemét)
Dacia	Dacia. Revue d'archéologie et d'histoire ancienne (Bucureşti)
DissArch	Dissertationes Archaeologicae ex Instituto Archeologico Universitatis de Rolando Eötvös nominatae (Budapest)
DissPann	Dissertationes Pannonicae (Budapest)
DMÉ	Debreceni Déri Múzeum Évkönyve
Dolg	Dolgozatok az Erdélyi Nemzeti Múzeum Érem- és Régiségtárából (Kolozsvár); Dolgozatok a Szegedi Tudományegyetem Régiségtudományi Intézetéből (Szeged)
EMÉ	Az Egri Múzeum Évkönyve (Eger)
EurAnt	Eurasia Antiqua. Zeitschrift für Archäologie Eurasiens (Mainz)
EphN	Ephemeris Napocensis (Cluj)

ESY	Eurasian Studies Yearbook (Michigan)
ÉtBal	Études Balkaniques
Ethn	Ethnographia (Budapest)
FM	Finskt Museum (Helsingfors)
FolArch	Folia Archaeologica (Budapest)
Fontes ArchHung	Fontes Archaeologici Hungariae (Budapest)
FMS	Frühmittelalterliche Studien. Jahrbuch des Instituts für Frühmittelalterforschung der Universität Münster (Berlin)
Germania	Germania. Anzeiger der Römisch-Germanischen Komission des Deutchen Archäologischen Instituts (Mainz)
Gladius	Gladius. Études sur les armes anciennes, l'armement, l'art militaire et la vie culturelle en Orient et en Occident (Granada)
GZM	Glasnik Zemaljskog Muzeja u Sarajevu (Sarajevo)
HOMÉ	A Herman Ottó Múzeum Évkönyve (Miskolc)
JAMÉ	A Nyíregyházi Jósa András Múzeum Évkönyve (Nyíregyháza)
JPMÉ	A Janus Pannonius Múzeum Évkönyve (Pécs)
JRGZM	Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums (Mainz)
KMTL	Korai Magyar Történeti Lexikon (Budapest)
KSz	Keleti Szemle (Budapest)
MAA	Monumenta Avarorum Archaeologica (Budapest)
MAG	Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft (Wien)
MFMA	Monographien zur Frühgeschichte und Mittelalterarchäologie (Innsbruck)
MFMÉ	A Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve (Szeged)
MFMÉ – MonumArch	A Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve – Monumenta Archaeologica (Szeged)
MFMÉ – StudArch	A Móra Ferenc Múzeum Évkönyve – Studia Archaeologica (Szeged)
MHKÁS	Magyarország honfoglalás kori és kora Árpád-kori sírleletei (Budapest)
MKCsM	Múzeumi kutatások Csongrád megyében (Szeged)
MonumHistBud	Monumenta Historica Budapestiensia (Budapest)
NMMÉ	A Nógrád Megyei Múzeumok Évkönyve (Balassagyarmat)
OpHung	Opuscula Hungarica
PMÉ	Pécs sz. kir. város Majorossy Imre Múzeumának Értesítője (Pécs)
RVM	Rad Vojvodjanskih Muzeja (Novi Sad)
RESEE	Revue de Ètudes Sud-Est-Européennes (Bucureşti)
RégFüz	Régészeti Füzetek (Budapest)
RégKutMagy	Régészeti Kutatások Magyarországon (Budapest)
RégTan	Régészeti Tanulmányok (Budapest)
RGA	Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde (Berlin–New York)
Savaria	Savaria (Szombathely)
SlovArch	Slovenská Archeológia (Bratislava)
Starinar	Starinar (Beograd)
StH	Studia Historica Academiae Scientinarum Hungaricae (Budapest)
StudArch	Studia Archaeologica (Budapest)
StudCom	Studia Comitatensia (Budapest)
Századok	Századok (Budapest)
SzMMÉ	A Szolnok Megyei Múzeumok Évkönyve (Szolnok)
Tibiscus	Tibiscus. Muzeul Banatului Timişoara (Timişoara)
TVMK	A Tapolcai Városi M úzeum Közleményei (Tapolca)
UJ	Ungarische Jahrbücher (Budapest)
Varia ArchHung	Varia Archaeologica Hungarica (Budapest)
VMMK	A Veszprém Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei (Veszprém)
WMMÉ	A Wosinsky Mór Megyei Múzeum Évkönyve (Szekszárd)
ZA	Zeitschrift für Assyrologie und Verwandte Bebiete bzw. Vorderasiatische Archäologie (Berlin)
ZfA	Zeitschrift für Archäologie (Berlin)
Ziridava	Ziridava. Muzeul Judeţean (Arad)
ZM	Zalai Múzeum (Zalaegerszeg)

AVARS, BULGARS AND MAGYARS ON THE MIDDLE AND LOWER DANUBE