

ARCHAEOLOGIA BULGARICA



2016 1

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ARTICLES

Cociş, S. / Gáll, E. / Urák, M. / Ursuţiu, A.: The Periphery of the Centre? The Late Avar Cemetery Part at Nădlac (Germ.: Nadlak; Hung.: Nagylak; Slov.: Nadlak)	1
Andreica (Szilagyi), L.: The Anthropological Analysis of the Graves from the Late Avar Age from Nădlac	77
Kelemen, I.: Animal Remains Discovered in a Partially Researched Cemetery from the Avar Period at Nădlac 7M	87
Tugya, B.: Eggshell Remains in an Avar Age Grave in Nădlac	93

REVIEWS

Henny PIEZONKA. Jäger, Fischer, Töpfer. Wildbeuterguppen mit früher Keramik in Nordosteuropa im 6. und 5. Jahrtausend v. Chr. Archäologie in Eurasien, Band 30, Habelt-Verlag, Bonn 2015, 438 Seiten, 205 Abbildungen, 107 Tafeln. (Ivanova-Bieg, M.)	97
Larissa BONFANTE (ed.). The Barbarians of Ancient Europe: Realities and Interactions. With contributions by Keyser, Paul T. / Ivantchik, Askold I. / Rolle, Renate / Marazov, Ivan / Wells, Peter S. / Frey, Otto-Herman / de Grammund, Nancy Thomson / Marincola, John / Stevenson, Walter / Farkas, Anne E. Cambridge University Press, 2011, xxiii + 395pp., 101 black-and-white illustrations, 23 colour plates. (Megaw, V.)	101

Editor-in-Chief: Lyudmil F. VAGALINSKI PhD (Sofia, Bulgaria)

Editorial Advisory Board: Prof. László BARTOSIEWICZ PhD DSc (Budapest, Hungary); Prof. Florin CURTA PhD (Gainesville, Florida, USA); Prof. Falko DAIM PhD DSc (Mainz, Germany); Prof. Haskell J. GREENFIELD PhD (Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada); Jean-Luc GUADELLI PhD (Bordeaux, France); Prof. Boris MAGOMEDOV PhD (Kyiv, Ukraine); Prof. J.V.S. MEGAW MA DLitt (Adelaide, Australia); Prof. Aristotle MENTZOS PhD (Thessaloniki, Greece); Prof. Marcel OTTE PhD (Liege, Belgium); Prof. Thilo REHREN (Doha, Qatar); Nicolay SHARANKOV MA (Sofia, Bulgaria); Rastko VASIĆ PhD (Belgrade, Serbia); Prof. Tivadar VIDA PhD (Budapest, Hungary); Prof. Jak YAKAR PhD (Tel Aviv, Israel).

Language Editors: Sven CONRAD PhD (German), Leipzig, Germany; Jean-Luc GUADELLI PhD (French), Bordeaux, France; Hallie M. FRANKS PhD (English), New York, USA.

All articles in Archaeologia Bulgarica are submitted to peer review.

On the cover: a bronze strap end, late 8th – early 9th c. AD; see the paper of Cociş et al. in this issue; photo by Malvinka Urák.

The Periphery of the Centre? The Late Avar Cemetery Part at Nădlac (Germ.: Nadlak; Hung.: Nagylak; Slov.: Nadlak)¹

ARCHAEOLOGIA BULGARICA
XX, 1 (2016), 1-75

Sorin COCIȘ / Erwin GÁLL / Malvinka URÁK / Adrian URSUȚIU

Abstract: In the frame of the Nădlac-Arad Motorway project 12 graves were excavated from the Late Avar period near Nădlac. According to the analysis of the burial customs, various object categories of the material culture (lock rings, earring, beads, components of belts with mounts, knives, potteries) can be dated to the end of the late Avar era, which corresponds to the late 8th or early 9th century. It can firmly be stated that some of the finds were the products of the latest metallurgical horizon (e.g. the punched belt-hole guard mount and the belt mounts with pendants) so some of the types found here can be connected to the last horizon, which is very important concerning their dating. The identity of the micro-community in Nădlac and their self-identification with a political community were influenced by the fact that they were a **primary group**. For them their micro- and macro-community traditions and their values and traditions at a micro-community level coming from their way of life might have been much more important than their ethnic identity. According to the clusters of late Avar sites and the supposed location of the hypothetical **'workshop circles'** in the Carpathian Basin, it is clear that the cemetery researched by us and its micro-region is situated outside the central territories. It seems to be supported by the heterogeneity of the belt sets, which shows that the members of this community had more difficulty obtaining the various decorations. The anthropological deformations indicating hard physical work also seem to underpin this **'peripheral'** status. Its location seems to show clearly that this micro-region, and within this the cemetery of this animal breeding and agricultural pagan population, is on the periphery of the power centre(s) of the Great Plain. They were the common people of the late Avar Khaganate in the eastern region of the Great Plain. We can talk about the cemetery of a settlement from the late Avar period, which was on the periphery, under the Khagan or some other Avar chief or big man (*tudun*, *iugurus*).

Key words: Nădlac, Avar period, burial customs, material culture, 8-9th centuries, periphery.

ON THE EXCAVATION

The Nădlac-Arad Motorway project was started in 2011, and at that time the sites of the main section were researched. After the end of the project and of the expropriations, an archaeological diagnostic survey was carried out in the fall of 2012 on the road, which would link the town of Nădlac to the aforementioned motorway. Site 7M, which was unknown until that time, was identified during the survey in October 2012 and the first exploratory trenches were dug by the Institutul de Arheologie și Istoria Artei, Cluj. The eight trenches were at a distance of ~50 m from one another, and their purpose was to limit the extent of the site in the section affected by the road works. The first four archaeological finds were unearthed at this time, as was the first Avar find, too (# 1). After the mechanical unearthing of the site, the finds were identified and researched in about two weeks (26.04.2014 – 07.05.2014)².

Just as in the case of other sites in the Nădlac/Nagylak-Pecica/Pécska section of the motorway, the upper level was made up of loose

¹ The authors would like to express acknowledgements to Ilona Bede, Gergely Szenthe and Csaba Szalontay for their kind, friendly help.

² The research team comprised of: Adrian Ursuțiu, Szabolcs Ferencz, Malvinka Urák, Gelu Copos, Sava Victor, Florin Mărginean, Luminița Andreica (Szilagyi).

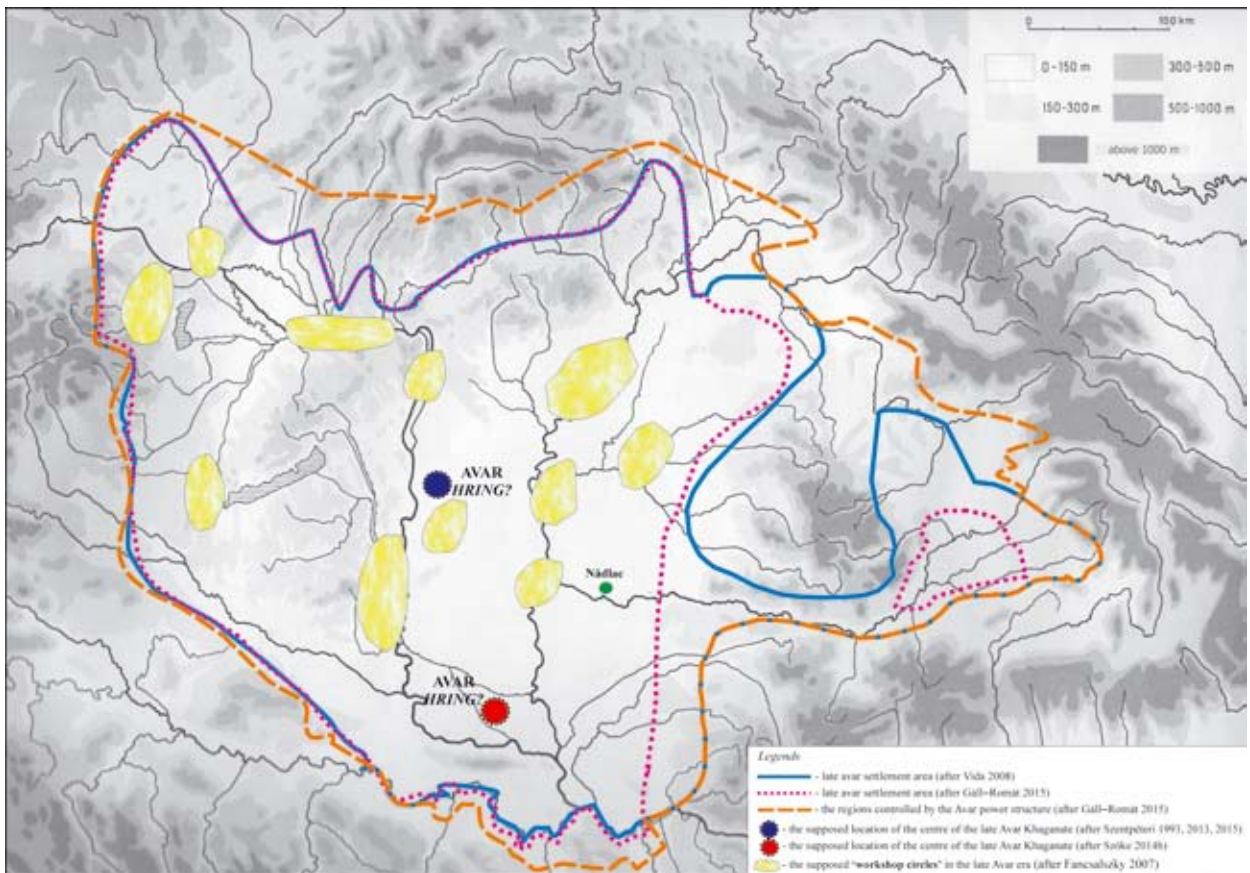


Fig. 9. The Carpathian Basin in the late Avar era: the 'Avar settlement area' and 'the areas under influence' controlled by the late Avar power structure

So it can be stated that in the case of Cemetery 7M (and the other two or three cemeteries) we cannot suppose the population of the core region in the late Avar era. According to the clusters of late Avar sites and the supposed location of the hypothetical 'workshop circles', it is clear that the cemetery researched by us and its micro-region is outside that territory. It seems to be supported by the heterogeneity of the belt sets, which show that the members of this community had more difficulty obtaining the various ornaments. The anthropological deformations indicating hard physical work (see the anthropological analysis later) also seem to underpin this 'peripheral' status. Its location seems to show clearly that this micro-region and within this the cemetery of this animal breeding and agricultural pagan people is on the periphery of the power centre(s) of the Great Plain. They were the common people of the late Avar Khaganate in the eastern region of the Great Plain. We can talk about the cemetery of a settlement from the late Avar period, which was on the periphery, under the Khagan or some other Avar chief or big men (*tudun*, *iugurus*⁶¹).

⁶¹ On the Avar dignity names, see Ligeti 1986, 145-149.