

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	9
1 Introduction	11
2 Setting the agenda: Themes and approaches	15
3 Regional distribution patterns	21
3.1. Chorology: Research method and goals	21
3.1.1. Previous research	21
3.1.2. Goals	23
3.1.3. Research methods	23
3.2. The geographic terms	29
3.3. The regional groups of the Avar archaeological heritage	30
3.3.1. The Hungarian Plain	31
3.3.1.1. The Nyírség region	31
3.3.1.2. The Hatvan area	33
3.3.1.3. The Tiszafüred area	34
3.3.1.4. The Danube-Tisza interfluve	36
3.3.1.5. The Tisza-Maros-Körös interfluve	40
3.3.1.6. The Tisza-Maros-Aranka interfluve	42
3.3.1.7. The Middle Tisza region	43
3.3.1.8. The Lower Danube region between Vukovar and Belgrade	44
3.3.2. Transdanubia	48
3.3.2.1. The khaganate's north-westerly quarter	48
3.3.2.2. The Lake Fertő area	50
3.3.2.3. North-eastern Transdanubia	52
3.3.2.4. The Keszthely area	55
3.3.2.5. The Zala Valley	56
3.3.2.6. The Pécs area/County Baranya	57
3.3.3. Transylvania	64
3.3.4. Summary	68
3.4. The possible reasons behind the differential distributions	69
3.4.1. General problems	69
3.4.2. The whys and wherefores	70
3.4.2.1. Burial customs	70
3.4.2.2. Workshops	80
3.4.3. Spatial and chronological indications of cultural differences	100
3.4.3.1. Regional disparities between adjacent regions	100
3.4.3.2. Chronological disparities in regional distributions	101
3.4.4. Costume	107
3.4.5. Identities	110
3.4.5.1. Group identities	110
3.4.5.2. Personal identities	111
3.4.6. Ethnic traits	111
4 The "Byzantine" connections of the Avar-period material	113
4.1. The hardships of research	113
4.2. The regions under Byzantine cultural influence	114
4.2.1. The sub-Byzantine nature of the Avar(-period) finds	115
4.2.2. Byzantine cultural elements in Eastern Europe	117

4.2.2.1. Earrings with pyramidal pendants	118
4.2.2.2. Mezőszilas-type earrings	118
4.2.2.3. Oval medallions	119
4.2.2.4. Anthropomorphic figures	119
4.2.2.5. P-shaped suspension mounts	120
4.2.2.6. Pseudo-buckles	121
4.2.2.7. Akalan-type belt fittings	121
4.2.2.8. Martinovka-type belt and footwear fittings	121
4.2.2.9. Eastern European costume accessories	126
4.2.3. Connections between the Avars, Byzantium and the Mediterranean as reflected by belt fittings	129
4.2.3.1. Belts with shield-shaped mounts and small side-straps	131
4.2.3.2. Belts with Byzantine buckles	134
4.2.3.3. Regional distributions: presences and absences	137
4.2.3.4. Whence did Byzantine-type buckles and a familiarity with their types arrive to the Carpathian Basin?	142
4.3. Conclusion	155
5 The Avars and Italy: A new appraisal	157
5.1. Why was this connection neglected in Avar studies?	157
5.2. The main considerations	158
5.2.1. Political conditions	158
5.2.2. Geopolitical conditions	160
5.2.3. Neighbourhood with Byzantium	161
5.2.4. Italian coins in the Avar lands	162
5.2.5. Archaeological finds	165
5.2.6. Historical aspects	170
6 How did articles of Mediterranean origin reach the Carpathian Basin during the Avar period?	175
6.1. Gifts	175
6.2. Booty	177
6.3. Trade	177
6.3.1. Forms of trade	178
6.3.2. Types of trade	178
6.4. Can we speak of trade among the Avars?	179
6.4.1. Historical aspects	179
6.4.2. Archaeological aspects	181
6.4.2.1. Byzantium	181
6.4.2.2. Italy	185
6.4.3. The nature of Avar trading activity	186
6.5. The irradiation of Italy to Central Europe	189
6.5.1. Finds of solidi minted in Italy from Central Europe	189
6.5.2. Parallels between the archaeological record of Italy, southern Germany and the Carpathian Basin	192
7 The distribution of certain Byzantine and Byzantine-type artefacts in the Avar Khaganate	195
7.1. Some Byzantine-type buckles of the sixth and seventh centuries	196
7.2. Byzantine-type ceramic, metal and glass vessels of the sixth and seventh centuries (grave finds)	196

7.2.1.	Byzantine-type pottery	196
7.2.2.	Byzantine- and Avar-type metal vessels	198
7.2.2.1.	Byzantine types	198
7.2.2.2.	Avar types	198
7.2.3.	Glass vessels	199
7.3.	Byzantine coins of the sixth and seventh centuries	200
7.3.1.	State-issued coins	200
7.3.2.	Counterfeits, copies and unofficial issues	203
7.3.3.	Solidi worn as coin pendants	203
7.3.3.1.	Perforated solidi	203
7.3.3.2.	Solidi worn as coin pendants	203
7.4.	Late antique-Byzantine-type finds	204
7.4.1.	Jewellery and costume accessories	204
7.4.2.	Buckles	205
7.4.3.	Pottery	206
7.5.	One aspect of eighth-century Byzantine and Byzantine-type connections	207
7.6.	Comparison of regional distributions	211
8	The cultural dimensions of the Mediterranean connections	215
8.1.	The Transdanubia phenomenon: A comparison of the distribution of various types in Transdanubia and on the Hungarian Plain	215
8.1.1.	Regional distributions	216
8.1.1.1.	Roughly identical frequencies in Transdanubia and on the Hungarian Plain	216
8.1.1.2.	Types predominantly distributed in Transdanubia	217
8.1.1.3.	Types predominantly distributed on the Hungarian Plain	219
8.1.1.4.	Transylvania: Between Transdanubia and the Hungarian Plain	220
8.1.1.5.	Comparison of regional frequencies	221
8.2.	The possible roots of the Transdanubia phenomenon	221
8.2.1.	The financial basis	222
8.2.2.	Craftsmen and workshops	222
8.2.2.1.	The possible survival of local Pannonian workshop traditions	223
8.2.2.2.	Groups (and/or craftsmen) transplanted from the Balkans	226
8.2.3.	Cultural impacts from Western Europe	232
8.2.4.	The cultural connections with Eastern Europe	236
8.2.5.	Cultural demand	237
8.3.	The possible historical and cultural roots of the differences between Transdanubia and the Hungarian Plain in the sixth–seventh centuries	239
9	Conclusion and a historical model	243
9.1.	Chorology	243
9.2.	Avar- and Byzantine-type articles	246
9.3.	The Avars and Italy	247
9.4.	A cultural attitude	248
9.5.	A multi-layered historical model	249
10	Excursus: Were the Kölked A and B cemeteries Gepidic burial grounds?	253
10.1.	The theory in the light of earlier views	253
10.2.	Archaeological problems in ethnic interpretations	255
10.3.	General archaeological objections	258
10.4.	The historical dimension: Archaeological aspects of continuity	259
10.5.	Strontium isotope analyses	261

11	Appendices	263
11.1.	Regional distributions of the artefact types, burial customs and metalworking techniques discussed in the study	263
11.1.1.	Jewellery	263
11.1.2.	Costume accessories	268
11.1.3.	Belt fittings	270
11.1.4.	Weapons	274
11.1.5.	Horse gear	277
11.1.6.	Pottery and metal vessels	279
11.1.7.	Tools, implements	282
11.1.8.	Goldsmithing techniques	283
11.1.9.	Burial customs, cultural phenomena	283
11.2.	Bibliography of the Byzantine-type buckles discussed in the study	286
	References	289