

POSSIBILITIES OF INTERPRETING THE 9TH CENTURY HORIZON IN THE NORTHERNMOST PERIPHERY OF TRANSDANUBIA

S Z A B I N A M E R V A 

Present paper discusses the various interpretations of the 9th c. material culture on the northernmost periphery of Transdanubia, Northwestern Hungary. Highlighting the archaeologically observable elements of the 9th c. cultures via the latest results of settlement archaeology in the researched region, the article presents finds and their wider context from the sites at two early medieval centres: Visegrád (Danube Bend) and Győr (by the confluence of the River Danube and the River Rába). During the train of thought, some relevant data is provided on trade, technology, and knowledge transfer between the Northern Transdanubian area and its northern neighbouring regions, data on gastronomy, archaeozoological data, various economic strategies and settlement structures in relation with the Western Slavic territories. The article is an attempt at a sophisticated answer to the research issue, whether the region along the river Danube had been a peripheral border region, no man's land or contact zone with vivid interregional connections.

Keywords: Hungary, Transdanubia, 9th c., trade, technology, knowledge transfer, gastronomy.

INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses the possibilities and limits of the interpretation of the 9th c. material culture on the northernmost periphery of Transdanubia (Northwestern Hungary) via the latest results of settlement archaeology, presenting examples of sites around two early medieval centres: Visegrád (Danube Bend) and Győr (by the confluence of the River Danube and the River Rába). These regions are localized in the northern region of the Avar Khaganate, the Late Avar Period is clearly documented and mapped. In this respect, the idea of the Danube as a border in the Avar Period hasn't even been raised up (*Bóna 1984*, map 25), the spread of the relevant sites definitely shows the appearance of the Avar Age sites in South Slovakia also. While in the Hungarian research the cadastre and mapping of the sites of the given period has been realized and published in a series (*Szentpéteri 2002*), the Slovak and Polish research focused on defining the northernmost border of the Khaganate,¹ as well as on discussing the question of Slav – Avar border (*Ďuricová 2012*, map 1; *Zábójník 1999*). It is worth drawing attention to the spread of new centres developed after the fall of

the Avar Khaganate on the territory of Slovakia. It is clearly observable, that besides the sites of Devínska Nová Ves, Bratislava, Mužla-Čenkov and Bíňa those all were localized north of the territory of the political formation declined in the early 9th c.²

The chronology of the sites in North Hungary, proving the 9th c. population's settlement hierarchy, raised the issue of a relatively new research topic (Fig. 1).³ The example of the two analyzed 9th c. settlements around Győr: Ménfőcsanak-Szeles dűlő and Bácsa-Szent Vid, as well as the region of Visegrád, where I analyzed the early medieval phases of the multilayered sites: Visegrád-Sibrik early medieval centre (earliest phase is the Late Avar/Early Carolingian Period, late 8th–early 9th c. and 9th c. period) and its simultaneously used *suburbium*, Visegrád-Várkert dűlő (Fig. 2) urged me to consider the regions' role in the period after the fall of the Avar Khaganate, perhaps in the Carolingian Pannonia Province. I have to be clear about this in advance: the question is too generous and general to answer at that stage of the research, not forgetting, that 9th c. written sources concerning the region's history are not available.⁴ The interpretation of the well-known written source about the

¹ Research of the various burial rites between the mid-7th c. and the early 9th c. (*Zoll-Adamikowa 1990*, 101, 102).

² Mapping of 9th–11th c. sites, settlements and fortifications (*Henning/Ruttkay 2011*, fig. 1).

³ See the chronology – Visegrád-Várkert dűlő (*Merva 2018*, 110–128); Visegrád-Sibrik domb (*Merva 2018*, 168–196); Bácsa-Szent Vid (*Merva 2018*, 218–229); Ménfőcsanak-Szeles dűlő (*Merva 2018*, 235–277).

⁴ The written source of *Conversio* doesn't mention this section of the Danube, but this is the case with the source of *Descriptio civitatum et regionum ad septentrionalem plagam Danubii* also (*Bavarian Geographer*; see *Fritze 1999*; *Veszprémy 1996* with further bibliography).

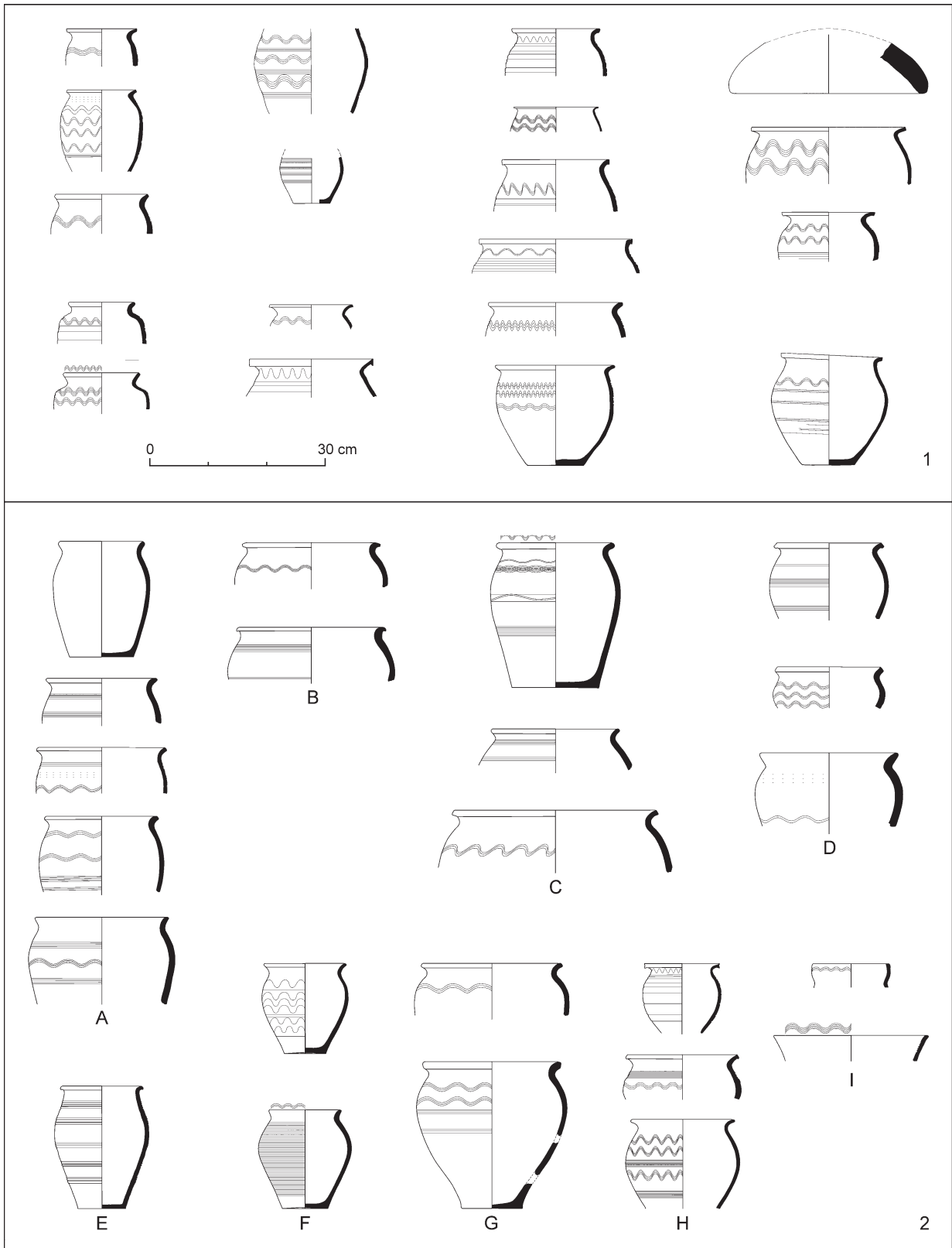


Fig. 1. Formal spectrum of the 9th c. pottery types in the region under research. 1 – Ménfőcsanak-Szeles dűlő; 2 – Visegrád-Sibrik domb and Visegrád-Várkert dűlő (after Merva 2018, fig. VII: 25, 26).



Fig. 2. The Carolingian Pannonia Province and the neighbouring regions after AD 828. The location of the sites under discussion. 1 – Bácsa-Szent Vid domb; 2 – Ménfőcsanak-Szeles dűlő (Northern Hungary); 3 – Visegrád-Sibrik domb; 4 – Visegrád-Várkert dűlő (after Szóke 2009, fig. 3).

region ‘... circa Danubium...’ from AD 811,⁵ related to the Slavic duxes is considerably undetermined: can we understand as people living above the Danube⁶ (that is the region localized in the north of the Danube)⁷, around, so both sides of the Danube (Havlík 1963, 136) or generally, we should think of the population in the Transdanubia, covering the region from the Vienna Woods till the confluence of the River Danube and the Drava.⁸

It is a fundamental question also, whether the region in Northern Hungary can be understood as a marginal, underpopulated, poor area, seeing that geographically it is far from the well-researched Carolingian centre in Pannonia Province, the site complex

of Zalavár at the Lower Zala Valley or the 9th c. Savaria, which archaeology is hardly known. Or should we interpret the right bank of the river Danube in the 9th c. as a multicultural contact zone, neighbouring the territories of the western Slavic region from the south? Should we take it into consideration, that this territory under discussion could have belonged culturally/politically to the Moravian-Slav regions for a while? Although the various possibilities are simplified and we will most likely never have one clear answer to explain the region’s cultural, and especially not its ethnical or political belonging, factually, after the archaeological results it seems to be clear, that it was definitely not a kind of ‘no man’s land’.

The original manuscript: <https://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/0001/bsb00018763/images/index.html?fp=193.174.98.30&id=00018763&seite=321> [31. 8. 2023]). I should add it: Marharii and Merehani probably refer to the regions of Moravia and Nitra, and in this context, it mentions 11 resp. 30 fortifications *civitas* (Třeštík 2002, 132–135). Reutter’s work is a very extended data source, writing about the Carolingian borders after the charters, collecting the mentioned fortresses (*palatium*, *curtis*, etc.). East of the River Rába he mentions only one *curtis*, but the written source doesn’t name it (Reutter 1911).

⁵ ‘*alii primores ac duces Sclavorum circa Danubium habitantium*’ (*Annales regni Francorum ad a. 811*, MMFH I, 44).

⁶ Literal translation.

⁷ Szóke 2014a, 24; 2014b, 32. After his interpretation, the written source refers to the Moravian Slavic population.

⁸ After Steinhübel’s research, it is not about the Moravians living north of the Danube (Steinhübel 1995, 26, 27, footnote 88).

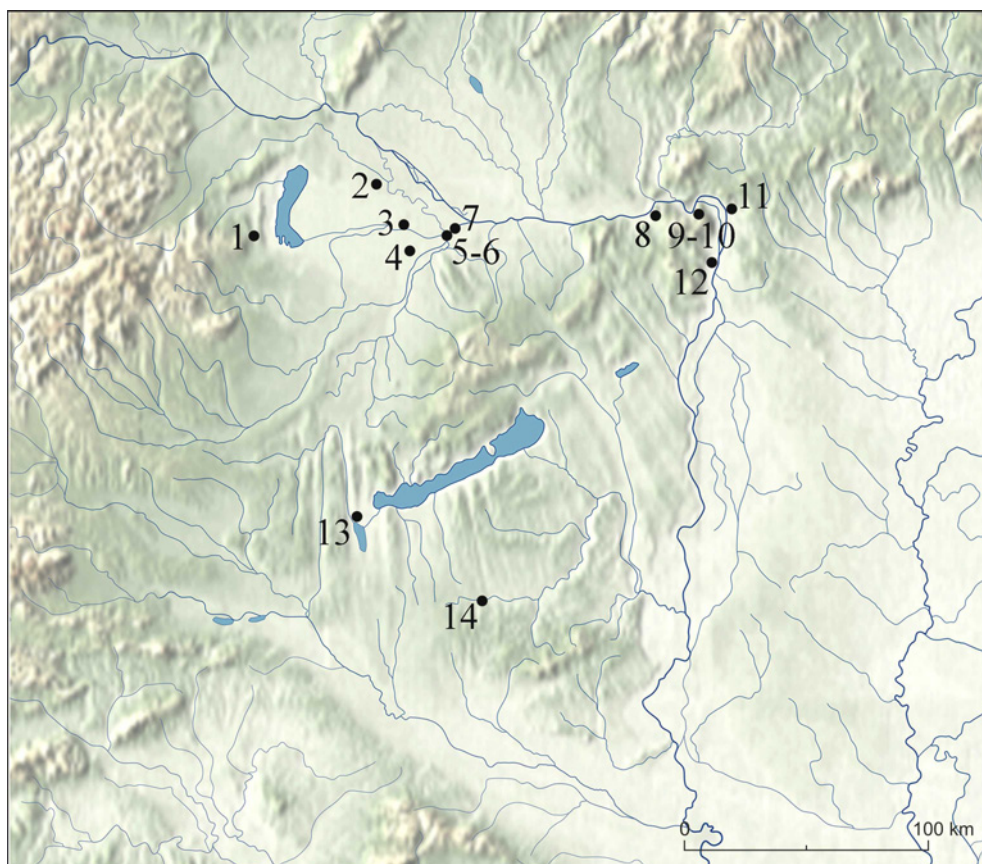


Fig. 3. The traces of the long-distance trade along the Danube, Northern Hungary. The spread of the graphite ware in the 9th and 10th–11th c. 1 – Sopron, Új utca–Szent György utca 6; 2 – Mosonmagyaróvár–Király domb; 3 – Mosonszentmiklós–Szilas; 4 – Enese–Szabadság utca 72; 5 – Győr–Káptalándomb; 6 – Győr–ECE; 7 – Bácsa–Szent Vid domb; 8 – Esztergom–Várhegy; 9 – Visegrád–Sibrik domb; 10 – Visegrád–Várket dűlő; 11 – Vác–Muzeum utca 9; 12 – Óbuda–Lajos utca 163–165; 13 – Zalavár–Vársziget; 14 – Kaposzentjakab–Bencés kolostor (after Merva 2018, fig. VII: 51.1).

I should highlight the previous state of the Hungarian research in question: thinking of the map published in 1984 (Bóna 1984, map 26), 2009 (Szóke 2009, 401, fig. 3) or even 2014 (Szóke 2014a, fig. 1). The Eastern Transdanubia to the Danube (involving the northernmost part we discuss presently) was either drawn as the eastern region of the Pannonia Province administratively, but not proven archaeologically (after Bóna 1984, map 26), or not even shaded as a Carolingian territory (Szóke 2014a, fig. 1), being a white spot on that map. The region under research, after the written sources about the border of the province, could have been part of the Carolingian province till AD 828, as well as the eastern neighbouring territory of the region under the direct Carolingian influence (*Pannonia Superior*) spreading by the line of the confluence of the River Danube and the Rába from AD 828. After Bóna's interpretation in the

1980s, for want of better, the Northeast corner of the Transdanubia, besides the presumably 9th c. toponym, Visegrád, may have been inhabited by the survival Avar population who had never been mentioned in the written sources at that time (Bóna 1984, map 26).

Besides the questionable political segmentation in the 9th c. (e.g. Szenthe 2007, 21–25), the cultural tradition of the Roman provinces, as well as the significance of the Roman age limes by the river, we shouldn't forget the physical geography of the Northern Hungary. On one hand, the river Danube has been always given the opportunity both to divide and to connect nearby regions. On the other hand, while in the case of the region of Győr, the Little Hungarian Plain is segmented only by the Danube and the floodplain of Zitnyí ostrov, the Danube Bend area is by the meeting of the river and the Visegrád Hill.⁹

⁹ It is a well known generalization, that the Slavic communities usually preferred to settle down on hilly woodlands. For instance, in the case of the South Transdanubian Slavic population, see Bóna 1984, 350.

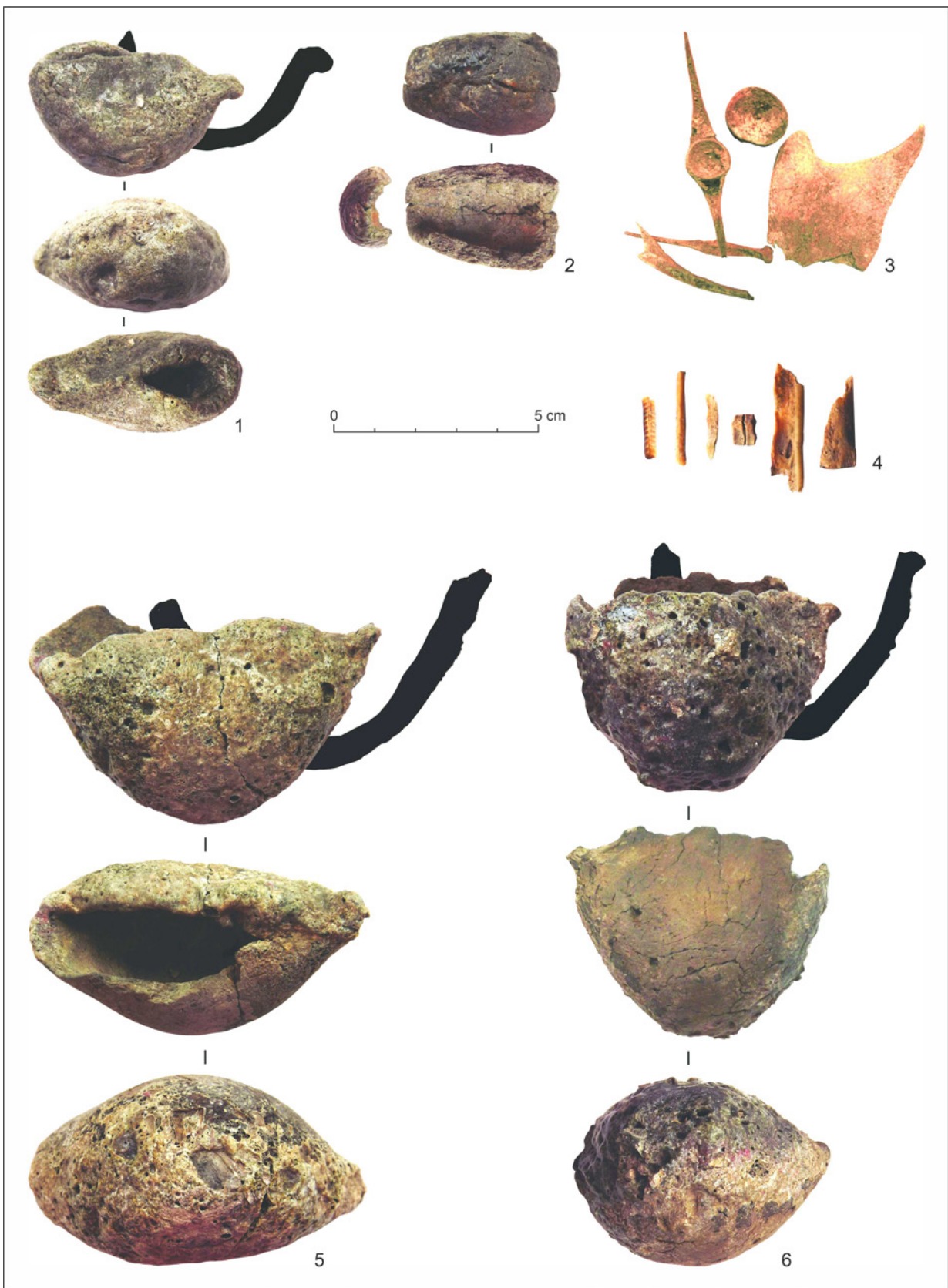


Fig. 4. Visegrád-Sibrik domb. The 9th c., so-called ‘bundle-shaped’ ceramic crucibles (*‘Beutelförmige’ Keramiktiegel*). Finds from the infill of the 9th c. metalsmith’s furnace’s work trench (2017/section 113/feature 79). 1, 2, 5 – fastening crucibles; 3 – fishbones; 4, 6 – casting crucible and the fish bones found in it scattered (after *Merva 2018*, Appendix, pl. 98).

Besides eliminating the above-mentioned white spot on the map, as well as having a better understanding of the archaeological aspect of this considerably complex research topic, it is essential to work on it and publish our results to be able to give relevant data either to confirm or disaffirm, but at least to sophisticate the general idea of the territorial spread of 'Great Moravia'.¹⁰ It is worth mentioning here the historian Ján Steinhübel's theory about the four principalities existing till AD 827 and the political history during Rastislav, which, after his theory, may have reached the north-eastern corner of the Transdanubia.¹¹ The Czech research, discussing the question of the Moravian proto-state and its spreading takes into consideration some contemporary control of the territories in the second half of the 9th c., both to west – northwest direct to the Czech Basin and to east – southeast direction to the territories of Slovakia or even North Hungary.¹²

It is obvious, that it is impossible to detect archaeologically some presumed political changes in the early medieval times,¹³ indeed, regardless of the long research history of the Lower-Zala valley we hardly know the 9th c. archaeology in West Hungary. This study's aim is to improve the state of the research.

BORDER OR CONTACT ZONE?
ARCHAEOLOGICALLY OBSERVABLE
ELEMENTS OF THE 9TH C. MATERIAL
CULTURES IN THE NORTHERNMOST
PART OF TRANSDANUBIA (HUNGARY),
RELATING TO THE NEIGHBOURING
REGION TO THE NORTH

My work hypothesis is that the region under discussion may have been rather a contact zone facilitating

the transcultural processes, than an impassable border. Naturally, it should be underlined, that the idea is considerably theoretical, since the above-mentioned region's settlement archaeology has just started to be better understood in recent years, and is far from characterized in detail. Despite this, at this stage of my research, I consider the possibility, and this is not exceptional. The question of contact zone has been several times discussed in early medieval context,¹⁴ and per definition, we can consider how it was originally circumscribed: '*Areas in which two or more cultures communicate and negotiate shared histories and power relations*', detailing that these are '*social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths*' (Pratt 1991, 33). Let's review the following factors in this context briefly.

Trade, technology and knowledge transfer

The early medieval long-distance trade between Northern Transdanubia and the western Slavic territories is clearly proven. One is the trade of graphite pottery already from the 9th c. along the Danube, this practice had continued in the 10th–11th c. also, as a kind of continuation of the interregional economic relations (Fig. 3; Merva 2016). At the same time, the exceptional depot of the so-called axe-like bars from Bácsa is a very telling example (Tomka/Merva 2016).

Nevertheless, besides the very clear cases of evidence on trade, there is a seemingly 'latent' factor, researching the contact between two territories, a proof of a lot deeper reflection of transcultural communication, due to technology and knowledge transfer. Naturally, without petrographically analy-

¹⁰ About the various ideas on the topic, see Sós 1973, 52–65. Both in the Czech and the Slovak literature, we can still read about such maps, which suggest the interpretation of the Moravian proto-state as a state, empire. For the anatomy, critics, alternative narratives of this phenomenon, see Macháček 2009. It is clearly seen, that the aim of the early research of Great Moravia was to prove the connection between the early medieval picture with the present states with nation-building intentions (Bowlus 1995, 141). This research process is naturally not individual, see other examples (Takács 2006). It is worth reading the realistic summary written by the younger Slovakian research generation, where the author experimented to delineate the border of the early medieval Nitra region based on archaeological results (König 2017, fig. 3).

¹¹ See the map of the Transdanubia (Western Hungary) in the 9th c. AD (Steinhübel 1995, the map of the page 107). Northeastern Transdanubia is designated with dark grey, as Rastislav's territory, after Steinhübel's theory (Steinhübel 1995, 44, 98). It is conspicuous, that the author, generally in his papers doesn't cite the Hungarian literature at all, specifically not literature on archaeology. Perhaps it can be considered as a bilateral attitude, as the Hungarian archaeology doesn't cite his papers. A short comment about Steinhübel's monography on the Principality of Nitra (Steinhübel 2004) see Bagi 2012, 237, footnote 8.

¹² See the map of the extension of the Moravian proto-state in the second half of the 9th c. Core area and the temporarily controlled territory, after Macháček 2013, fig. 1; 2. Besides, see the frequently cited map in the Czech literature, about the extension of the 9th c. Moravian proto-state Poláček 2018, 133; Vavřínek/Sláma 1996.

¹³ About the archaeology of the first Bulgarian state see Takács 2016.

¹⁴ The research issue of the early medieval contact zones has been framed several times, among others: the project of Frontier, Contact Zone or No Man's Land? The Morava – Thaya Region from the Early to the High Middle Ages (principal investigators: Stefan Eichert and Jiří Macháček, the years of the project: 2015–2017, the number of the project: I 1911-G21) or the Slovakian – Hungarian research project (no. VEGA 1/0897/12) on the population archaeogenetic research from the 10th c. contact zone ('*Archeogenetický výskum kontaktnej zóny z 10. storočia na Slovensku*') lead by prof. dr. Mária Bauerová and dr. Melinda Nagy with the cooperation of Veronika Csáky, Gusztáv Mende Balázs, Aranka Csósz and dr. Gabriel Fusek.

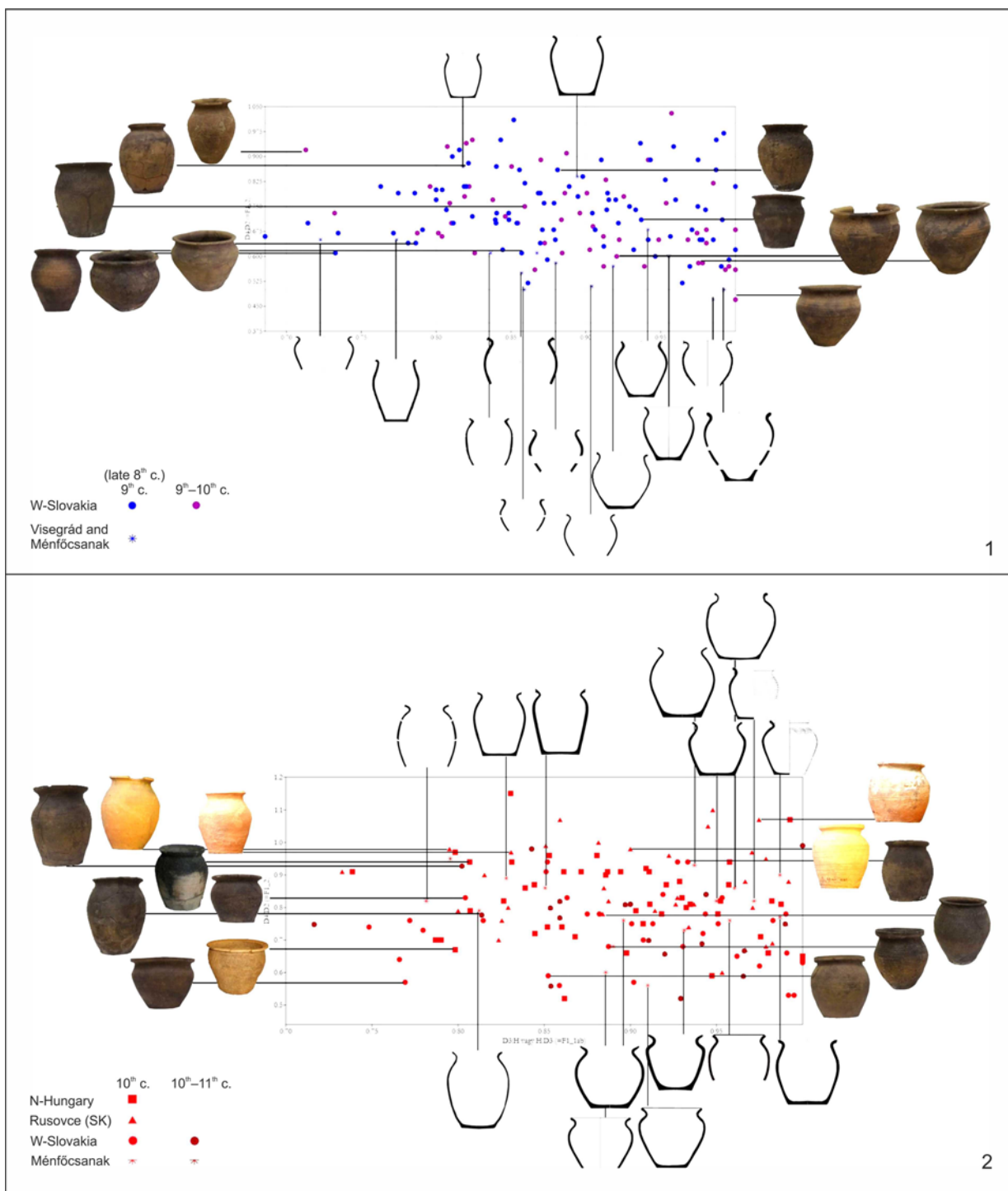


Fig. 5. 1 – scatterplot matrix on metrical data of whole ceramic vessels from the region of Northern Hungary and Southwestern Slovakia (late 8th–9th c. and 9th–10th c. horizon); 2 – scatterplot matrix on metrical data of whole ceramic vessels from the region of Northern Hungary and Southwestern Slovakia (10th–11th c. and 11th c. horizon; after *Merva 2018*, fig. VII: 32, 33).

sis, there are several cases when it is impossible to establish whether the particular artefact is an export or the imprint of a technology transfer in some details of the product. Obviously, the intensity

of the communication of two or more populations’ craftsmen correlated to the detectability of the technology transfer on the archaeological artefact (*Gelbert 2001*, 84–87).¹⁵

¹⁵ About the research of technology transfer and technology in the area of metallurgy, among others *Schwarcz 2018*; *Szenthe 2016*.

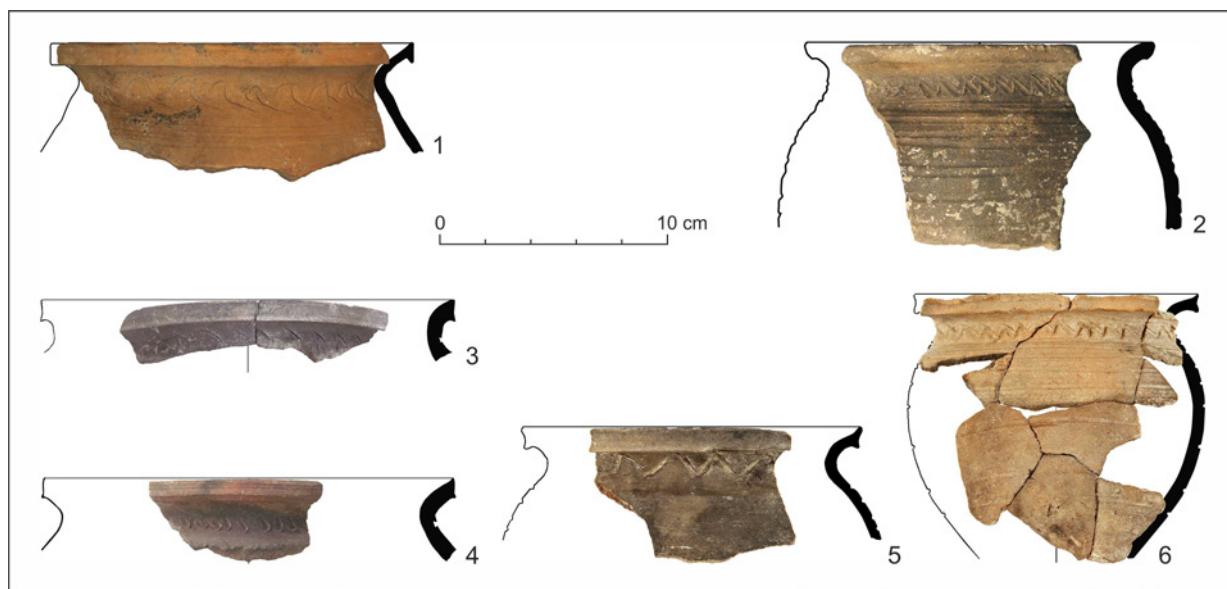


Fig. 6. Ménfőcsanak-Szeles dűlő and Visegrád-Várkert dűlő. Wavy line decoration of the vessel's neck. 1 – 2010.20.3. XJM; 2 – 2010.205. XJM; 3, 4 – without inv. nr. MKM; 5 – 65.28.81. MKM; 6 – 65.28.78. MKM (after *Merva 2018*, fig. VII: 38).



Fig. 7. Bácsa-Szent Vid domb. Traces of the non-local pottery tradition on some finds (after *Merva 2018*, fig. VII: 44).

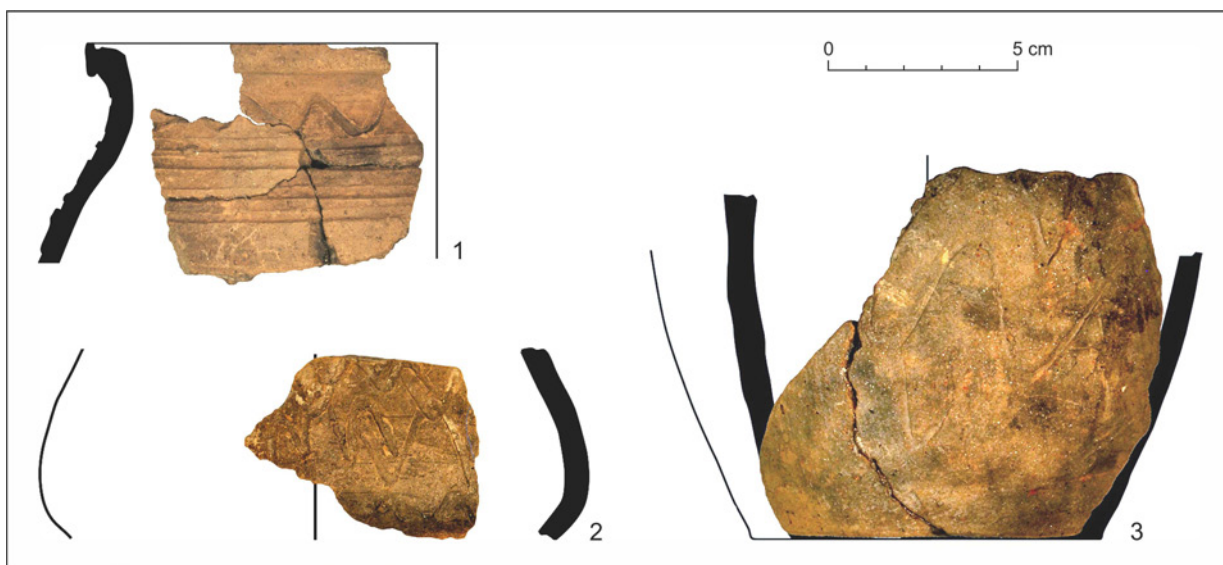


Fig. 8. Ménfőcsanak-Szeles, feature 327 (inv. nr. 2010.52.9. XJM) and feature 146 (inv. nr. 2010.13.1. XJM and inv. nr. 2010.13.3. XJM; after *Merva 2018*, fig. VII: 46, 48). Pot fragments identified as the Southern Moravian Blučina-type pottery (see *Macháček 2001*, fig. 103, group E).

Metallurgy

As a brilliant example of technology transfer, I should mention the metalsmith's furnace I excavated in 2017 at the 9th c. centre of Visegrád. Seeing the clay crucibles, it is clearly proven that the type, as well as the technology, had been the same that appears typically in the western Slavic territories or some Bulgarian centres, differing from the Carolingian type crucibles (Fig. 4; *Merva 2017* with further bibliography).

Pottery

While it is not far to seek cultural contact with the Upper-Danube valley or the Mediterranean in the case of the Carolingian centre of Zalavár (HU; *Szőke 1992a; 2012*), it also seemed to be obvious to research the possible similarities with the 9th c. pottery both in Western Slovakia¹⁶ and South Moravia¹⁷.

Without detailing the overall picture some relevant examples should be highlighted (Fig. 5).¹⁸

Some specific markers (rim types, localization of some decoration type on the vessel, the wavy line on the neck of the vessel), comes into question only as exceptions in the case of sites near Győr or Visegrád (Fig. 6), which are typical in the Western Slovakian and Moravian regions, appear as exceptional cases at the settlements in the northernmost part of Transdanubia in Hungary. This is specifically interesting, seeing that after the fall of the Avar Khaganate presumably the organization of the Avar potters had collapsed and new pottery wares in the territory of the Carolingian Pannonia Province hasn't been established yet (regardless of the polished yellow ware which is rather connected with the elite's material culture; at the same time, in contrast of the South Moravian wares: the so-called Mikulčice type or the Blučina type).

Furthermore, it is worth considering the possible connection between the pottery traditions via the example of the so-called cup-shaped rim or the inserted in point rows on the shoulder of the vessel from Bácsa (Fig. 7)¹⁹ or such markers like the batten-

¹⁶ I had the opportunity to see the pottery of the sites of Nitra-Šindolka, Bojná-Valy, Bíňa, Kamenín-Kiskukoricás, Mužla-Čenkov, Nitra-Lupka, Nitra pod Zoborom, Čakajovce, Svätý Peter, Úľany nad Žitavou, Bučany, Malé Kosihy (SK) in 2016 September – November, thanks to the celebrated Gabriel Fusek, as well as to Matej Ruttikay, Peter Bednár, Milan Hanuliak, Gabriel Nevizánsky, Terézia Vangľová, Eva Fottová, Ivona Vlkolinská and Eva Čaprđová (Archeologický ústav SAV, v. v. i., Nitra).

¹⁷ I had the opportunity to see the pottery of the sites of Přerov-Horní náměstí, Zelená Horá, Břeclav-Lány, Kostice-Zadní hrúd, Dolní Věstonice, Vysočany, Břeclav-Pohansko, Mikulčice-Valy, Uherské Hradiště in 2018 January – July, thanks to Jiří Macháček, Adéla Balcárková (Masarykova Univerzita, Ústav archeologie a muzeologie, Brno), Lumír Poláček, Rudolf Procházka (Archeologický ústav Akademie věd České republiky Brno) and Luděk Galuška (Centrum slovanské archeologie – Moravské zemské muzeum Uherské Hradiště).

¹⁸ See the comparison of shape analysis on some Western Slovakian and North Hungarian sites' 8th/9th–10th c. and 10th–11th c. completed vessels.

¹⁹ For some excellent formal analogues see *Brather 1996*, 33, fig. 7: 10–16.

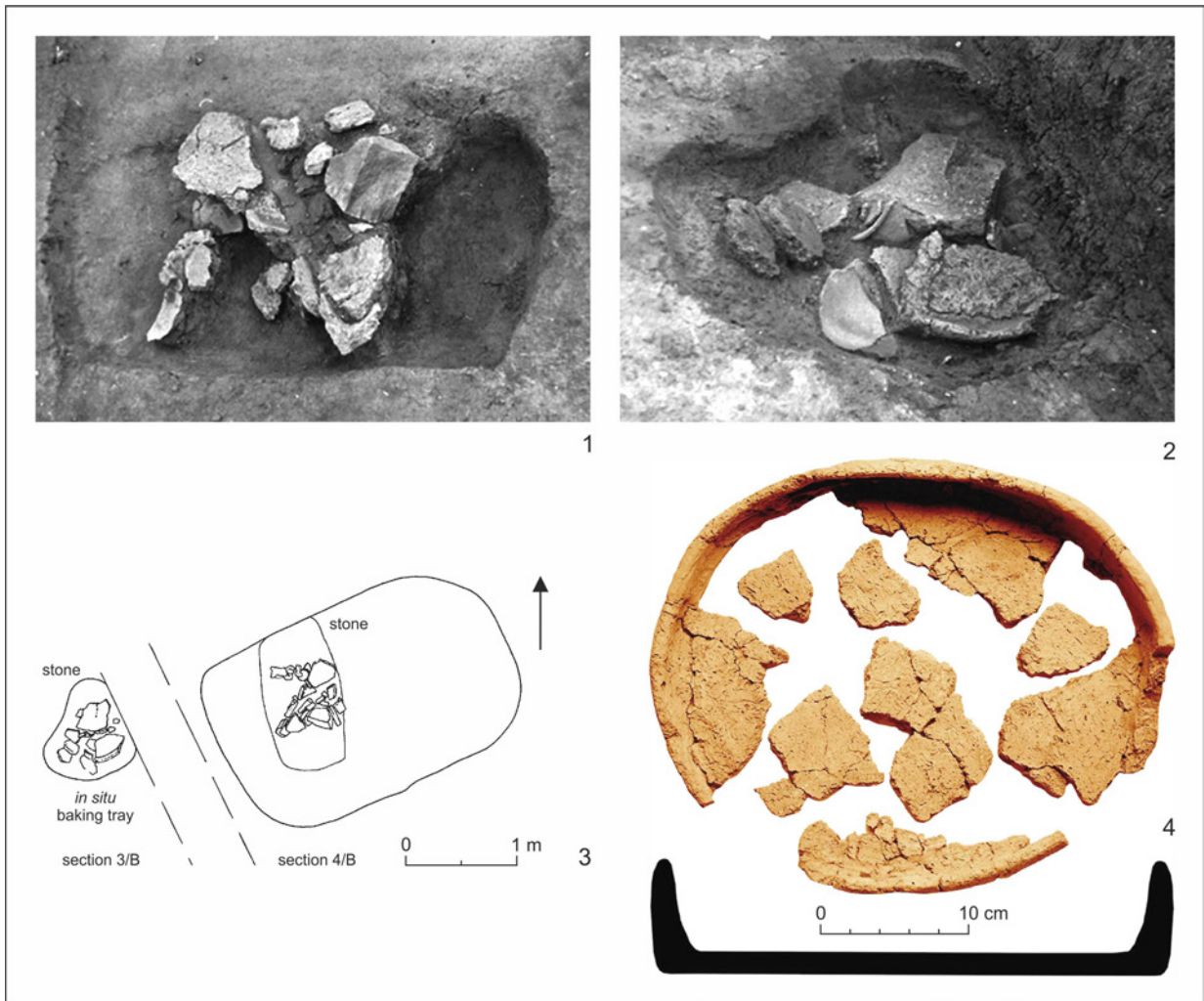


Fig. 9. Visegrád-Várkert dűlő. Photo documentation of the *in situ* find (Feature 1963/section 3/B and 4/B, inv. Nr. 65.28). 9th c. clay roasting tray (after the documentation of the leader of the excavation in 1963, István Méri).

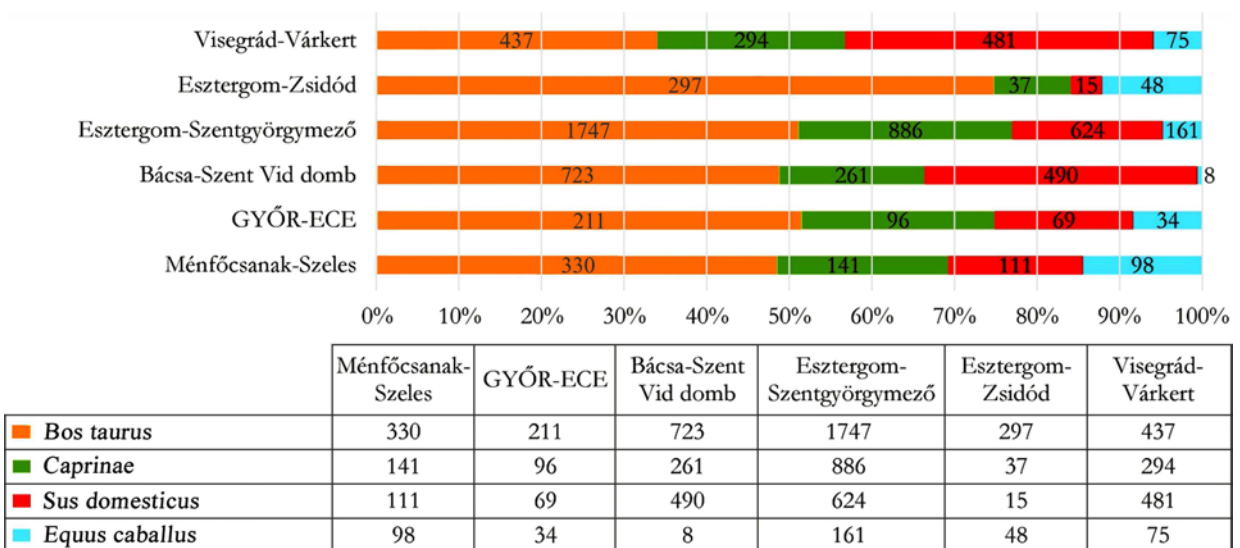


Fig. 10. The archaeozoological data of the 9th–12th c. settlements in Northern Transdanubia (after Merva 2018, fig. VII: 15, right).

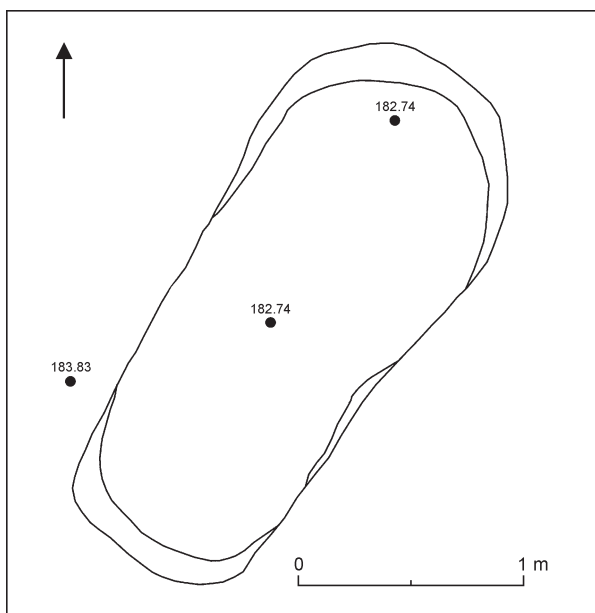


Fig. 11. Visegrád-Sibrik domb (Feature 2014/10). Grave shaped pit, potentially connected with pig keeping (after *Merva 2018*, fig. VII: 15, left).

like decorations (Visegrád-Szent András kolostor, 8th–9th c.; *Buzás/Eszes 2012*, 22).²⁰

But as an exceptional example from the region, sherds belonging to two vessels of the Blučina group were found near Győr also (Fig. 8). After the latest result this pottery group spread in a broader territory, not only in Moravia but in Bohemia, Slovakia and Austria also (*Mazuch 2000*), and the list is completed with this Hungarian site. The characteristic profiled rim type, as well as the wavy line decorated in the lower part of the vessel doesn't look like the local pottery tradition's average product.

Data on gastronomy, archaeozoological data, various economic strategies

Using the pottery research not only for classification and relative chronology,²¹ but as a tool to understand more the gastronomy of the region, as well as the lifestyle and connecting it to the archaeozoological data, I can provide some relevant details.

At the site of Visegrád-Várkert dúlő, besides the dominant percentage of the various sized pots (and not a single clay cauldron from the later, late 10th–11th c. period!) the sherds of some clay roasting trays are also registered from the late 8th–9th c.

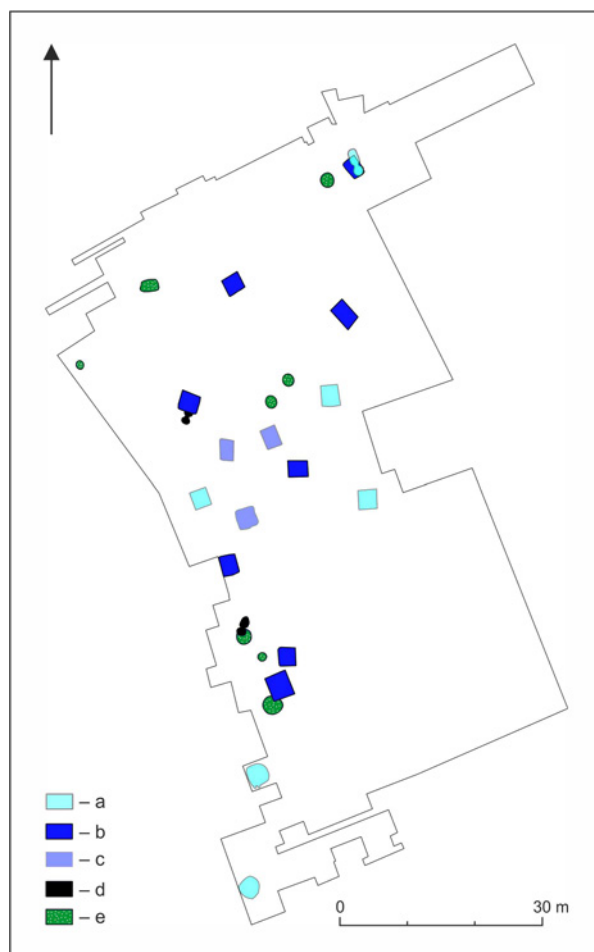


Fig. 12. Visegrád-Várkert dúlő. The site plan of the late 8th–9th c. settlement. Legend: a – uncertain chronology, house and metalsmith's furnace; b–e – early medieval period (late 8th–9th c.; b – house; c – house, presumably connected with this period; d – outdoor oven; e – pit; after *Merva 2018*, fig. V: 2. 87, left).

suburbium (Fig. 9). The pottery type is known, but considerably rarely appears in Hungary, both in the Avar Age as well as in the 9th c. These are mostly found in Northeast Hungary, for instance in the Bodrogek region (*Pintér-Nagy/Wolf 2017*), according to the earlier research the clay roasting tray has been typically interpreted as an element of the early medieval Slavic material culture. Recently it is understood as the evidence of the preferred economic strategy than pointing out exclusively one ethnic population, even if this is a frequently found artefact in western Slavic areas. It is characteristic of settled people instead of stockbreeders and leads back to deep cultural traditions and

²⁰ One part of the artefacts is apparently dated to the Árpád Age, the rest can be connected with the 8th–9th c. horizon.

²¹ See the scatter plot of some comparative shape analysis *Merva 2019*, 356, fig. 2; 3.

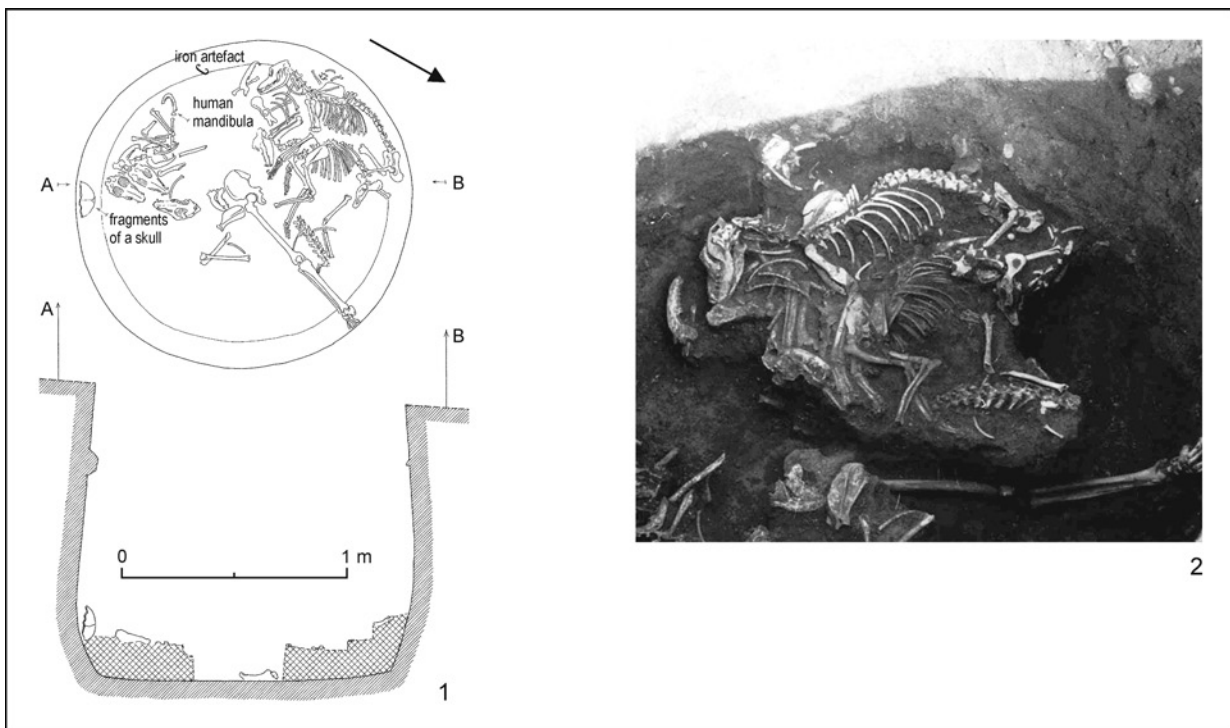


Fig. 13. Visegrád-Várkert dűlő (feature 1980/1). 9th c. deviant burial found (after Merva 2018, fig. V: 2. 94).

gastronomy.²² It is also relevant to mention the baking bell artefacts (2 reconstructed items, type IV B) from the 9th c. period of the rural settlement at Ménfőcsanak-Szeles dűlő.²³

Besides the pottery, we should highlight the ratio of the domestic animals via the archaeozoological data of some relevant sites. Seeing the quantity distribution of the various species excavated at early medieval settlements in the central Carpathian Basin, both the 9th c. site of Bácsa-Szent Vid (trade site by the bank of the Mosoner Danube) and Visegrád-Várkert dűlő (*suburbium* of Visegrád-Sibrik domb) seem to be unusual in the general cultural context (Fig. 10). Meanwhile, the highest percentage of cattle is dominant by early medieval cattle breeder communities, and the opposite to the appearance of domesticated pig, in the case of Visegrád, the pig was most frequently consumed, and seeing the results of Bácsa we also see a higher ratio of this species compared to other sites, even if the presence of cattle was still the highest by the last case. Although this archaeozoological pattern is exceptional among settlements excavated in Hungary, perfectly fits the pattern which is characteristics of the western Slavic

territories.²⁴ In this context it is pretty relevant to highlight the settlement feature for keeping pig, the grave-shaped pits, which appears in some exceptional case in Hungarian sites (*Skriba* 2010, 230, fig. 4: 3; Vát-Telekes dűlő, feature 81; *Szőke* 1992b, 135; *Tomka* 1998, 47, 78, fig. 10; Sopronkőhida, feature/pit 1972/3) and frequently found in the territory north of the Danube (*Milo* 2014, 113–117, fig. 49). I can present examples both from the site of Bácsa-Szent Vid and Visegrád-Sibrik domb (Fig. 11).

Settlement structure

Although the three main existing features (*munitio*, *palatium*, and maybe the *emporio* as well) can be identified with various emphasis in this local centre of Visegrád-Sibrik domb, its appearance can be generally interpreted in a lot wider context than only in the western Slavic world. Nevertheless, regardless of the generally used pit houses, I should report one outstanding phenomenon: seeing the appearance and the lack of linear structures (fences, ditches) on early medieval sites we can see relatively clear isola-

²² A new interpretation of the appearance of the 6th–7th c. clay roasting trays, as the sign of the elite's feasting see *Curta* 2017.

²³ About the Mediterranean cultural concerns see *Vida* 2016. The baking bell from Ménfőcsanak-Szeles dűlő can be described as the type IV B (*Vida* 2016, 363, fig. 1).

²⁴ See the relevant data of the 9th c. South Moravian centres *Macháček* 2010, 438, Diagram 128; some further data of western Slavic settlements in Germany *Prilloff* 1994.

tion of the western Slavic territories in this respect, where the linear structures are rarely found (Milo 2014, 153, map 14). Seeing the settlement structure of the sites under discussion we can see those are similar to the sites north of the Danube, having no early medieval ditches (Fig. 12).

Besides, in the Hungarian research the single published case is from Visegrád-Várkert dűlő (Feature 1980/I), where a deviant burial in the 9th c. medieval settlement's inner area was found, while in the western Slavic territories (Kaznakov 2013), among others, the neighbouring region several deviant burials had been documented from this period (Hanuliak 1997, 157, fig. 1). The deviant burials are generally connected with the pagan superstition and belief, the intentional deviant burial of the dead person, in order to make the individual harmless, to prevent him from coming back to the living community (Hanuliak 2004, 209; Kaznakov 2013, 153). The settlement feature from Visegrád can be potentially connected with this tradition (Fig. 13).

CONCLUSION

After presenting the similarities both on the level of artefacts as well as on the level of settlement

structures, I conclude that all presented resemblances with the economic pattern (especially the archaeozoological data), the gastronomic markers as the evidence of deep tradition, the anatomy of sites (pre-urban development, suburbans, elite served with their own craftsmen in the centre, etc.) is a lot more worth considering than the imprint of trade or a possible, but rarely appearing technology transfer in pottery. As it was emphasized, those similarities, which undoubtedly can be shown in some cases of pottery are definitely exceptional, there is no massive overlap. The degree of contact and communication, only on the base of artefacts wouldn't necessarily be described as intensive, at the same time not to be neglected. While we can draw a parallel between the appearance of the Blučina group in the Hungarian Little Plain in the 9th c. and, for instance, the scattered appearance of clay cauldrons in the 11th c. Bohemia (Profantová 2010, 305, fig. 9), the interpretation shouldn't be more than the evidence of some form of interregional contact. As it was mentioned above, these cases suggest also, that the rapidly changing political borders cannot be documented archaeologically and even if it had happened, the material culture isn't necessarily reflected in it.

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Možnosti interpretácie horizontu 9. storočia v najsevernejšej periférii Zadunajska

Szabina Merva

SÚHRN

Predložený príspevok pojednáva o rôznych interpretáciách materiálnej kultúry 9. stor. v najsevernejšej periférii Zadunajska, v severozápadnom Maďarsku. Vyzdvihnutím archeologicky pozorovateľných prvkov kultúry 9. stor. prostredníctvom najnovších výsledkov sídliskovej archeológie v skúmanom regióne, uvádza nálezy a ich širší kontext z lokalít v blízkosti dvoch ranostredovekých centier – Visegrádu (ohyb Dunaja) a Gyóru (pri sútoku Dunaja a Ráby). Predstavuje niekoľko relevantných údajov o obchode, technológiách a prenose poznatkov medzi oblasťou severného Zadunajska a jej severnými susednými regiónmi, dáta o gastronómii, archeozoológii, ekonomických stratégiách a o sídelných štruktúrach vo vzťahu k územiám západných Slovanov. Kým tieto regióny sú lokalizované na severnom území Avarského kaganátu a neskorovavarské obdobie je jasne zdokumentované a zmapované, o 9. stor. existovalo doteraz veľmi málo informácií.

Nová chronológia lokalít v severnom Maďarsku, dokazujúca hierarchiu osídlenia v 9. stor., nastolila otázku relatívne novej výskumnej témy (obr. 1). Príklady dvoch sídlisk z 9. stor. v okolí Gyóru – Ménfőcsanak-Szeles dűlő a Bácsa-Szent Vid, ako aj visegrádskeho regiónu, kde autorka spracovala včasnostredoveké fázy viacvrstvových lokalít – včasnostredoveké centrum Visegrád-Sibrik (najskoršia fáza je neskorovavarská/ranokarolínska doba: koniec 8.–začiatok 9. stor. a obdobie 9. stor.) a jeho súčasne využívané *suburbium* Visegrád-Várkert dűlő (obr. 2) – nábádali zväziť úlohu regiónov v období po páde Avarského kaganátu, prípadne v karolínskej provincii Panónia. Príspevok je pokusom spresniť odpoveď na otázku, či bol región pozdĺž rieky Dunaj okrajovým pohraničným regiónom, územím nikoho, alebo kontaktnou zónou so živými medziregionálnymi prepojeniami susediacimi s južnou časťou územia západných Slovanov. Vystáva aj otázka, či toto územie mohlo istý čas kultúrne/politicky patriť do moravsko-slovanských oblastí. Iste, téma je príliš široká a všeobecná na to, aby na ňu bolo možné v tejto fáze výskumu odpovedať, najmä ak písomné pramene z 9. stor. týkajúce sa histórie tohto regiónu prakticky neexistujú.

Hoci sú rôzne možnosti interpretácie značne zjednodušené a s najväčšou pravdepodobnosťou nikdy nebude mať jednoznačnú odpoveď na objasnenie kultúrnej, a už vôbec nie etnickej či politickej príslušnosti regiónu, v skutočnosti sa na základe archeologického materiálu zdá byť zrejme, že rozhodne nešlo o „územie nikoho“.

Okrem odstránenia doteraz bieleho miesta na mape, ako aj lepšieho pochopenia archeologického aspektu tejto

pomerne komplexnej výskumnej témy, je nevyhnutné na nej pracovať a publikovať výsledky, aby bolo možné relevantné údaje buď potvrdiť alebo vyvrátiť a aspoň doladiť všeobecnú predstavu o územnom rozšírení Veľkej Moravy.

Pracovnou hypotézou je, že diskutovaný región mohol byť skôr kontaktnou zónou uľahčujúcou transkultúrne procesy, než nepriechodnou hranicou. Prirodzene, treba podčiarknuť, že myšlienka je značne teoretická, keďže archeológia osídlenia spomínaného regiónu sa v posledných rokoch len začína vyvíjať a ani zďaleka nie je detailne definovaná a kategorizovaná.

Príspevok poskytuje údaje o obchode, technológiách a prenose poznatkov v 9. stor. Jasne dokázaný je včasnostredoveký diaľkový obchod medzi severným Zadunajskom a západnými slovanskými územiami. Jedným je obchod s grafitovou keramikou už od 9. stor. pozdĺž Dunaja, pokračujúci aj v 10.–11. stor. ako istá forma kontinuity medziregionálnych hospodárskych vzťahov (obr. 3). Výnimočný depot tzv. sekerovitých hrivien z lokality Bácsa je zároveň veľmi výrečným príkladom. Okrem jasných dokladov obchodu však existuje aj zdanlivo „latentný“ faktor skúmajúci kontakt medzi dvoma územiami, ktorý je dôkazom oveľa hlbšej reflexie medzikultúrnej komunikácie vďaka transferu technológií a poznatkov. Najvýraznejšie príklady podporujúce túto myšlienku sa týkajú metalurgie a keramického materiálu. Ako vhodný príklad transferu technológií je nutné spomenúť metalurgickú pec z 9. stor., ktorú autorka objavila v roku 2017 v centre Visegrádu (obr. 4). Pri pohľade na hlinené tégliky je zrejme, že typ, ako aj technológia boli rovnaké, aké sa štandardne vyskytujú na územiach západných Slovanov, alebo v niektorých bulharských centrách a výrazne sa líšili od téglikov tzv. karolínskeho typu. Popri formálnych obdobiach keramiky (obr. 5–7; 9) sa ako vzácna výnimka objavuje južne od Dunaja napríklad aj charakteristická keramika skupiny Blučina (obr. 8). Ako ďalšie príklady možno spomenúť „gastronómiu“ (spektrum domácej keramiky a absencia hlinených kotlíkov) či archeozoologické dáta (obr. 10), ktorých zloženie je typické pre západoslovanské územie a značne sa líši od včasnostredovekých pastierskych spoločností. Je potrebné zdôrazniť aj niektoré relevantné znaky sídelných štruktúr (obr. 11–13) a hierarchiu sídlisk.

Na základe podobnosti archeologického materiálu, ako aj sídliskových štruktúr, je možné dospieť k záveru, že všetky prezentované príbuzné znaky ekonomických modelov (najmä archeozoologické údaje), gastronomických markerov, ako dôkazu hlbokoj tradície a charakteru

zástavby lokality (predmestská zástavba, predmestia, elita obsluhovaná vlastnými remeselníkmi v centre atď.), sú oveľa závažnejšie faktory, než doklady obchodu alebo možný, no zriedkavo sa vyskytujúci technologický transfer v hrnčiarstve. Ako bolo zdôraznené, tie podobnosti, ktoré sa v niektorých prípadoch keramiky nepochybne dajú preukázať, sú rozhodne výnimočné, iste nie masívne rozšírené. Ak by sa stupeň kontaktu a komunikácie medzi regiónmi posudzoval len na základe artefaktov, určite by ho nebolo možné hodnotiť ako intenzívny, no

Obr. 1. Základná typologická schéma keramiky z 9. stor. v skúmanom regióne. 1 – Ménfőcsanak-Szeles dűlő; 2 – Vrch Visegrád-Sibrik a vinica Visegrád-Várkert (podľa *Merva 2018*, obr. VII: 25, 26).

Obr. 2. Karolínska provincia Panónia a susedné regióny po roku 828. Poloha diskutovaných lokalít. 1 – Bácsa-Szent Vid domb; 2 – Ménfőcsanak-Szeles dűlő (severné Maďarsko); 3 – Visegrád-Sibrik domb; 4 – Visegrád-Várkert dűlő (podľa *Szőke 2009*, 401, obr. 3).

Obr. 3. Stopy diaľkového obchodu pozdĺž Dunaja v severnom Maďarsku. Rozšírenie grafitovej keramiky v 9. a 10.–11. stor. 1 – Sopron, Új utca-Szent György utca 6; 2 – Mosonmagyaróvár-Király domb; 3 – Mosonszentmiklós-Szilas; 4 – Enese-Szabadság utca 72; 5 – Győr-Káptalandomb; 6 – Győr-ECE; 7 – Bácsa-Szent Vid domb; 8 – Esztergom-Várhegy; 9 – Visegrád-Sibrik domb; 10 – Visegrád-Várkert dűlő; 11 – Vác-Muzeum utca 9; 12 – Óbuda-Lajos utca 163–165; 13 – Zalavár-Vársziget; 14 – Kaposszentjakab-Bencés kolostor (podľa *Merva 2018*, obr. VII: 51.1).

Obr. 4. Visegrád-Sibrik domb. Tzv. „zväzkové“ keramické téglíky („Beutelförmige“ Keramikriegel). Nálezy z výplne pracovného žlabu metalurgickej pece z 9. stor. (2017/plocha 113/objekt 79). 1, 2, 5 – odlievacie téglíky; 3 – rybie kosti; 4, 6 – odlievací téglík a v ňom nájdené rybie kosti (podľa *Merva 2018*, príloha, tab. 98).

Obr. 5. 1 – rozptyľová matica metrických údajov celých keramických nádob z oblasti severného Maďarska a juhozápadného Slovenska (koniec 8.–9. stor. a horizont 9.–10. stor.); 2 – rozptyľová matica metrických údajov celých keramických nádob z oblasti severného Maďarska a juhozápadného Slovenska (horizont 10.–11. a 11. stor.; podľa *Merva 2018*, obr. VII: 32, 33).

ani v takomto prípade by nemal byť prehliadaný. Aj keď môžeme nájsť paralelu medzi výskytom skupiny Blučina v Malej dunajskej kotline v 9. stor. a napríklad rozptýleným výskytom hlinených kotlíkov v Čechách v 11. stor., interpretácia by nemala byť viac ako dôkaz určitej formy medziregionálneho kontaktu. Ako už bolo spomenuté vyššie, tieto prípady naznačujú aj to, že rýchlo sa meniace politické hranice nie je možné archeologicky zdokumentovať, a aj keby sa tak stalo, materiálna kultúra sa v nich nemusí nevyhnutne odrážať.

Obr. 6. Ménfőcsanak-Szeles dűlő a Visegrád-Várkert dűlő. Vlnovková výzdoba hrdiel nádob. 1 – 20.3.2010. XJM; 2 – 2010.205. XJM; 3, 4 – bez inv. č. MKM; 5 – 65.28.81. MKM; 6 – 65.28.78. MKM (podľa *Merva 2018*, obr. VII: 38).

Obr. 7. Bácsa-Szent Vid domb. Stopy cudzej hrnčiarkej tradície na niektorých nálezoch (podľa *Merva 2018*, obr. VII: 44).

Obr. 8. Ménfőcsanak-Szeles, objekt 327 (inv. č. 2010.52.9. XJM) a objekt 146 (inv. č. 2010.13.1. XJM a inv. č. 2010.13.3. XJM; podľa *Merva 2018*, obr. VII: 46, 48). Fragmenty hrnca identifikovaný ako juhomoravská keramika typu Blučina (pozri *Macháček 2001*, 150, obr. 103, skupina E).

Obr. 9. Visegrád-Várkert dűlő. Fotodokumentácia nálezu *in situ* (motív 1963/rez 3/B a 4/B, inv. č. 65,28). Hlinený pražiaci rošt z 9. stor. (podľa dokumentácie vedúceho výskumu v roku 1963 Istvána Mériho).

Obr. 10. Archeozoologické údaje zo sídlisk z 9.–12. stor. v Severnom Zadunajsku (podľa *Merva 2018*, obr. VII: 15, vpravo).

Obr. 11. Visegrád-Sibrik domb (objekt 2014/10). Objekt v tvare hrovej jamy, potenciálne spojený s chovom ošípaných (podľa *Merva 2018*, obr. VII: 15, vľavo).

Obr. 12. Visegrád-Várkert dűlő. Plán sídliskovej lokality z 8.–9. stor. Legenda: a – interiérová alebo metalurgická pec s nejasnou chronológiou; b–e – obdobie včasného stredoveku (koniec 8.–9. stor.; b – obydlie; c – obydlie, pravdepodobne súvisiace s týmto obdobím; d – exteriérová pec; e – jama; podľa *Merva 2018*, obr. V: 2. 87, vľavo).

Obr. 13. Visegrád-Várkert dűlő (objekt 1980/1). Atypický pohreb z 9. stor. (podľa *Merva 2018*, obr. V: 2. 94).

